A Strategic Study
of the
Prophetic *Siirah*
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Introduction

As mentioned in the introduction to the Islaamic Guide to Strategy, this Strategic Series was constructed with the intention of reminding both the Muslims and non-Muslims of Islaam's strategic heritage. Unfortunately, the Muslims have left their global leadership role for so long that they, along with the rest of the world's nations, have come to forget Islaam's supremacy in this regard. It was within this context that the Strategic Study of the Prophetic *Siirah*[1] was born.

The Study follows a very similar pattern to the one laid out in the Islaamic Guide. First, the strategic environment within which the *Siirah* is set is analyzed and discussed. Second, the values, interests, and priorities of the Prophet (S) and his companions (R) are defined. Third, a strategic appraisal is made, leaving us with a view into the overarching policies of the Prophet (S). Fourth, the means and ways used by the Prophet (S) are evaluated with an eye towards making a comparison with Quraysh. Fifth, a grand strategy is born.

But before embarking on this strategic journey through the Prophetic *Siirah*, one last reminder must first precede the main bulk of the study. Since, many Muslims – unfortunately even the scholars from amongst them – are quick to write off any calls to strategic discussion with the slogan of "Victory is from Allaah," it was necessary to first explain the relationship between acting within our capacity and between knowing that the end result is ultimately in the Hands of Allaah, the Almighty.

[1] The *Siirah* is the chronicled life of the Prophet (S). It generally includes an explanation of the state of affairs before the birth of the Prophet (S); it then continues to document the most important events that transpired during his (S) life, whether prior to his (S) prophethood or afterwards; and then usually concludes with his (S) death; while some versions also go on to discuss the events immediately following his (S) death, including the wars of apostasy and Abu Bakr's (R) term as *khaliifah*.

How to Apply the Worldly and Heavenly Means in Order to Obtain Victory

What is meant by the terms "worldly" and "heavenly" means?:

Worldly means are those that could be described as "material" in nature. These means are more hands-on and pragmatic than heavenly means. Examples can range from planning, to logistics, to researching, to kinetic actions and execution of commands.

Heavenly means, on the other hand, are more "intangible" in nature. These means are more obviously recognized as forms of worship than the worldly means. Examples can range from *Tawhiid*[2], to trust in Allaah, to supplication, to prayer, to brotherhood and obedience, and so forth, on to the other well-known forms of worship (whether related to the heart, tongue, or limbs).

Both of these types of means are highlighted here in response to our tendency, as faithful Muslims, to heavily stress the heavenly means; often to the complete exclusion of worldly means. This is usually done out of good intentions due to (1) an eager desire to contradict the Disbelievers who trust, not in Allaah, but solely in their worldly means and also due to (2) the superlative position that the heavenly means possess in Islaam.

This lofty status, above which the heavenly means soar, should not, however, cause us to completely leave off the worldly means or to treat them as if they are not an obligation in the religion. This is, in fact, a deceitful trick of the Shaytaan.

One must take the worldly means while trusting in Allaah; without using either one as an excuse to leave the other:

Ibn Taymiyyah said in al-Fataawaa al-Kubraa (vol. 1/p. 106):

> "Chapter:
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> His statement: "Oh My slaves, all of you are hungry except the one I feed, so ask Me for food, I will feed you. All of you are naked except the one I clothe, so ask me for clothing, I will clothe you…"[3] dictates two grand principles:
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> The first of them is: the obligation of trusting in Allaah for one's sustenance (i.e. that which brings about benefit - like food - as well as that which removes harm -

[2] *Tawhiid* is Islaamic Monotheism. This theology dictates that Allaah is the One and Only Creator, Sustainer, and Maintainer of the Universe. Allaah is Unique and unlike any of His creation in His Names and Attributes. Allaah is, therefore, the only god who deserves to be worshipped and obeyed and all acts of devotion must be directed to Him alone, without partners.
[3] This hadiith was reported by Muslim and others.

like clothing). No one, except Allaah, is capable of feeding or clothing in the absolute sense, while the capability that some of His slaves *do* have only comes through taking the means that lead to these actions. That is why He said: "And upon those for whom a child was delivered is the obligation of providing sustenance and clothing for their wives in goodness," (al-Baqarah: 233) and He said: "and do not give the foolish your wealth, which Allaah made for you a means of sustenance, and provide for them from it and clothe them." (an-Nisaa': 5) So what is being ordered with here is only that which is within the capability of Allaah's slaves. Similar to this is the statement of Allaah: "Or giving food on a day of hunger, to an orphan of kinship, or a poor person covered in dust," (al-Balad: 14-16) and His statement: "And feed the one who suffices and the one who asks," (al-Hajj: 36) and His statement: "So eat from it and feed the downtrodden and the poor." (al-Hajj: 28) Allaah also said: "And when it is said to them spend from that which Allaah has provided you, those who disbelieve say to those who believe: 'Should we feed the one whom Allaah could feed if He wished?'" (Yaasiin: 47) So He blamed the one who left off an action, which has been ordered, due to the excuse of relying on pre-ordainment.

From this it is deduced that taking the means that have been ordered, or even performing permissible actions, does not negate having trust in Allaah that these means will be actualized. Rather, our need of Allaah is still firmly established even while taking the means, because there is nothing in creation that can be considered a complete means which always leads to the desired effect.

This is why events do not always have to be tied to that which is, at times, made as a causal means. Rather, whether they are tied or not remains pending to the will of Allaah, the Exalted, because whatever He wills *is* and whatever He does not will *is not*. So whoever thinks that he can simply rely upon the means without trusting in Allaah, he has left the trust in Allaah that Allaah has made obligatory upon him and he has come up short in relation to the obligation of *Tawhiid*. This is why such people are defeated when they rely solely on the means. **Whoever hopes for victory or sustenance from other than Allaah, Allaah will defeat him** just as 'Ali (R) said: 'A slave does not hope for anything but from his Lord and he does not fear anything but his own sins.'[4] Allaah, the Exalted, said: "Whatever Allaah exposes mankind to of mercy, there is none to hold it back. And whatever Allaah holds back, there is none, after Him, to let it free. And He is the All-Mighty and All-Wise." (Faatir: 2) Allaah, the Exalted, said: "If Allaah afflicts you with harm, there is no one to remove it except Him. And if He wishes good for you, there is none to prevent His blessings. He gives them to whomever He wishes from His slaves." (Yuunus: 107) And He said: "Say: do you see that which you call upon other than Allaah? If Allaah wishes for me harm, could they remove this harm of His? Or if He wishes mercy for me, could they hold back His

[4] This *athar* (i.e. a narration that only reaches back to the era of the companions or later) is in *Shu'b al-Imaan* of al-Bayhaqi with a *hasan* (decent) chain withstanding the fact that it is *mursal* (i.e. the narration of a narrator 'directly' from another narrator whom he *did not* meet; through omission of intermediary sources). 'Ikrimah did not hear from 'Ali bin Abii Taalib (R).

mercy? Say: Allaah is sufficient for me and in Him trust the people of trust." (az-Zumar: 38)

This is also similar to the one who trusts in Allaah and leaves off the means that have been ordered. This person is also ignorant, oppressive, and is sinning against Allaah because he left off what He has ordered him to do. For acting upon what has been ordered, is also a form of worshipping Allaah. Allaah, the Exalted, said: "So worship Him and put your trust in Him." (Huud: 123) And He said: "You alone do we worship and from you alone do we seek help." (al-Faatihah: 5) And He said: "Say: He is my Lord. There is no deity worthy of worship but Him. In Him do I trust and to Him do I turn in repentance." Shu'ayb (AS) said: "In Him do I trust and to Him do I turn in repentance." (ar-Ra'd: 30) And He said: "Whatever you differ over, its ruling is for Allaah. That is Allaah, my Lord. In Him do I trust and to Him do I turn in repentance." (ash-Shuuraa: 10) And He said: "There is a good example for you in Ibraahiim and those who were with him when they said to their people: 'Indeed we are free of you and that which you worship other than Allaah. We have disbelieved in you and the enmity and hatred that exists between us and you has become apparent, and it will remain forever, until you believe in Allaah alone;' except for the statement of Ibraahiim to his father: 'I will ask forgiveness for you, but I do not possess any means to protect you from Allaah.' Oh our Lord, in You do we trust and to You do we turn in repentance and to You is the final destination." (al-Mumtahinah: 4)

So the one who does something he was ordered to do, but leaves off the trust that he has been ordered to have, is not greater in sin than the one who has the trust that he was ordered to have and then leaves off the means he was ordered to take. Both of them have left off something that is obligatory upon them and, although they both fall under the category of 'sinning,' one of them could be more blameworthy than the other; while it should be noted that having trust in Allaah is in reality a type of means.

Abu Daawuud reported in his *Sunan* that the Prophet (S) judged between two men. Then the one whose favor he judged against said: 'Allaah is sufficient for me and He is the best Disposer of affairs.' So the Prophet (S) said: "Indeed Allaah blames those who are lazy, so be clever. Then, if you are overcome, say: 'Allaah is sufficient for me and He is the best Disposer of affairs.'"[5]

In *Sahiih* Muslim it is reported from Abu Hurayrah (R) that the Prophet (S) said: "The strong believer is better and more beloved to Allaah than the weak believer and there is good in all. Strive to obtain that which will benefit you and seek help from Allaah and do not become lazy. Then, if something afflicts you do not say:

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[5] It is *dha'iif* (weak). It contains the *'an'anah* (i.e. the usage of the term 'from' when narrating) of Baqiyah bin Waliid, who is known for *tadliis* (i.e. omitting intermediary sources; leaving the false impression that the narrator has indeed heard a *particular* narration from another narrator whom he actually *did* meet and previously report from), and a *majhuul* (unknown) narrator named Sayf ash-Shaami.

‘If only I had done such and such,’ but rather say: ‘Allaah has ordained it and He does as He wishes,’ because ‘if’ opens the door to the work of Shaytaan.”

In the statement of the Prophet (S): “Strive to obtain that which will benefit you and seek help from Allaah and do not become lazy,” **there is an order to take the means which we have been commanded to take (i.e. to strive to obtain the beneficial things). In this statement there is also an order to have trust in Allaah (i.e. to seek help from Allaah). So whoever suffices with doing only one of these two things has disobeyed regarding the other.** The Prophet (S) also prohibited being lazy here which is the opposite of being clever. This is similar to the other *hadiith*[6]: “Indeed Allaah blames those who are lazy, so be clever.” This is also similar to the *Shaami*[7] *hadiith*: "The clever one is he who takes himself to account and works for that which comes after death. And the lazy one is he who leaves himself to follow his desires and has excessive hope in Allaah."[8] Therefore, the lazy person in this hadiith is the opposite of the clever one. So whoever says that the lazy person is the opposite of someone who is righteous has distorted the *hadiith* and did not understand its true meaning. Another *hadiith* with this meaning is: “Everything is dependant upon pre-ordainment, even laziness and cleverness.”[9]

Also related to this is the *hadiith* reported by al-Bukhaari in his *Sahiih* from ibn ‘Abbaas that he said: ‘The people of Yemen used to perform Hajj without taking any provisions and they would say: ‘We are those who trust in Allaah.’ Then they would ask of the people once they reached. So Allaah, the Exalted, said: “And take provisions, for indeed the best of provisions is piety.”(al-Baqarah: 197)’ Therefore, whoever does what he was ordered to do of taking provisions, and uses that to help him worship Allaah, and gives of that to the needy, he has obeyed Allaah in both of these endeavors. The opposite of such a person is the one who leaves off taking provisions, and then begins to take from the provisions of the other pilgrims, and becomes a burden upon them. In this case, even if he is not dependant upon one particular thing, he is still dependant upon others in a general sense. However, if someone who takes provisions does not also have the trust in Allaah that he was ordered to have, and he also does not help the pilgrims, the obligations he left off could be from the same category as the obligatory provisions that the other person left off.

So these texts explain the mistakes of the different groups. One group is not concerned with taking the means that it has been ordered to take and it considers them to be a deficiency in *Tawhiid* and trust; while also believing that leaving off these means is from the perfection of trust and *Tawhiid*. These people are deceived and this could lead them to add to their mistake

[6] A narration from the Prophet (S).
[7] *Shaami* means of or related to *Shaam* or the Levant (Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, and Jordan).
[8] It was reported by Ibn Maajah and it is *dha'iif*. It contains Abu Bakr bin 'Abdullaah bin Abii Maryam who is a weak narrator.
[9] It was reported by Muslim.

the inclination to follow their desires and become unemployed. Most of these people, who leave off the means they were ordered to take, end up tying themselves to other forms of 'means.' Some of them tie their hearts to the creation, in fear and hope, or they leave off obligations, or even permissible means - which would have been more beneficial for them - due to their fanaticism in having trust. An example is the one who decides, out of his trust in Allaah, to try to heal his sickness without taking medicine. Or he tries to obtain his provisions without actually working. This might work at times but simply taking a light medicine or doing a bit of work, or trying to learn some helpful knowledge would have been more beneficial for him. Rather, doing so could even be more obligatory upon him than all of his extreme devotion that he put forward to obtain this simple matter which costs about a dirham or so. And worse than these types of people are those that also make trusting in Allaah, and engaging in supplication, a deficiency, and they believe that this is not fit for the 'elite.' They believe that simply sitting back and watching what becomes of them, due to divine pre-ordainment, is the true station of the elite.

But He said in the *hadiith*: "All of you are hungry except the one I feed, so ask Me for food, I will feed you. All of you are naked except the one I clothe, so ask me for clothing, I will clothe you," and in at-Tabaraani – or another book[10] – it is reported that the Prophet (S) said: "Let one of you ask his Lord for all of his needs, even the strap of a sandal if it were to break, because if He does not make it easy, it will never be made easy." This means that such a person must also say that asking Allaah for guidance or obeying Allaah is also from this same category.

This understanding of theirs means that they must completely reject everything that has been ordered. Rather, it means that they must reject that which has been created and that which has been ordered. The reason for this mistake of theirs is that they believe that pre-ordainment negates taking the means that they have been ordered to take. This is similar to the one who becomes a heretic and decides to leave off all obligatory actions due to believing that pre-ordainment has already decided for him whether he will be from the people of bliss or the people of suffering. Such a person does not understand that pre-ordainment has already taken account of all of these matters. If Allaah ordains that someone will be from the people of bliss, it is also ordained by Allaah that that person will be facilitated in doing the actions of the people of bliss. And if Allaah ordains that someone will be from the people of suffering, it is also ordained by Him that He will facilitate for him doing the actions of the people of suffering. This is in line with the response of the Prophet (S) to this same question in the *hadiith* of 'Ali bin Abii Taalib, 'Imraan bin Husayn, Suraaqah bin Ju'sham, and the others.

[10] The *hadiith* was indeed reported by at-Tabaraani as well as others. In fact, it is even found in some versions of at-Tirmidhi. At-Tirmidhi himself explained that the chain contains Qutn bin Nusayr who is known for his strange narrations, especially from this route. Others have narrated the *hadiith* from Ja'far bin Sulaymaan from Thaabit in *mursal* fashion.

Also related is the *hadiith* of at-Tirmidhi: ibn Abii 'Umar narrated to us that Sufyaan narrated to us from az-Zuhri from Abu Khuzaamah from his father that he said: 'I asked the Prophet (S): 'Oh Allaah's Messenger, do you see these medicines, these *ruqyahs*[11], and these defensive measures that we use? Do any of them repel what has been divinely pre-ordained?' He said: "They are from the divine pre-ordainment of Allaah."'

Another group believes that having trust in Allaah is something special for the elite and the ones who have become close to Allaah due to their supererogatory actions. They also say the same about all of the other actions of the heart, and that which comes along with them, such as: love, hope, fear, thankfulness, and so forth. This is clear misguidance because all of these things are obligatory upon every individual according to the consensus of the people of Belief. Whoever completely leaves these things off is either a disbeliever or a hypocrite. But, people differ in degrees with regards to these actions just as they do with regards to the apparent actions of the limbs. So some of them oppress themselves, while others are mediocre, and others rush to good deeds. The texts of the Book and *Sunnah*[12] are abundant in this regard. So the people who turn away from these matters, whether it be by turning away from learning or by turning away from acting upon them, are not less blameworthy than those who leave off the apparent actions that they have been ordered to perform, while performing only some of them. Rather, the blame falls upon anyone who leaves off any of the obligations, whether they are from the concealed matters or the apparent ones, because the concealed matters are the origins for the apparent ones. The concealed matters are the roots of the apparent ones, and the apparent matters are the perfection, and the branches, which can not be complete without the concealed ones."

Ibnul Qayyim said in Zaad al-Ma'aad (vol. 3/p. 420):

"**And from these [benefits which can be derived from the *hadiith* about the conquest of Makkah] is that: it is from the completion of having trust in Allaah that one takes the means that Allaah has placed – both by pre-ordainment and by legislation – for obtaining the desired effects. Allaah's Messenger (S) and his companions were the most complete of creation in their trust in Allaah but they would still meet their enemies while protecting themselves with all forms of weapons. Allaah's Messenger (S) even entered Makkah with a helmet on his head although Allaah had revealed to him that: "Allaah will protect you from mankind." (al-Maa'idah: 67).**

Many of those who have not fully researched this topic, or those who are not firmly grounded in knowledge, have a hard time understanding this so they try to come up with clever explanations. Sometimes they say that he did this in order to

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[11] Reciting Qur'aan, phrases reported from the Prophet (S), or other supplications that do not contain that which contradicts the former.
[12] The statements, actions, and consents of the Prophet (S).

teach his *Ummah*[13], and at other times they say that this took place before the verse was revealed.

In Egypt, one of the leaders was told of a *hadiith* reported by Abul Qaasim bin 'Asaakir in his *at-Taariikh al-Kabiir* that: 'After the incident of the poisoned mutton presented by the Jewish lady, Allaah's Messenger (S) used to not eat any food that was presented to him until the one who presented it ate from it first.'[14] They said that this was done as an example for the kings to come. So someone asked: 'How do we reconcile between this and the statement of Allaah, the Exalted: "And Allaah will protect you from mankind?" (al-Maa'idah: 67) If Allaah has guaranteed that He will protect him, he should know that no human would ever be able to harm him.' So some of them responded by saying that this indicates that this *hadiith* is weak, while others said that this occurred before the revelation of the verse and then he stopped doing that afterwards. But, if these people had only pondered the fact that Allaah's guaranteed protection does not negate him taking the means, it would have sufficed them of such burdensome responses. This guarantee from his Lord, the Exalted, does not negate or contradict protecting himself from mankind. **Allaah has also informed that He will give victory to His religion and raise it over all other religions and that does not negate His orders to fight, to make preparations for war, to gather strength, to accumulate steeds of war, to be cautious, to guard oneself from the enemy, to fight him with all forms of warfare, and to use deceit (because the Prophet (S) used to give false impressions of his intentions whenever he decided to go out for battle). This is because Allaah, the Exalted, has informed us about the final result, and the end, which will only come about due to taking the means that Allaah has placed as the cause for all of that. The Prophet (S) was more knowledgeable of his Lord and more obedient of His commands to leave off the means that Allaah had provided for him – out of His Wisdom – to act as a cause for that which He had promised him: giving victory to His religion and defeating His enemies.** This is similar to the way in which Allaah promised to protect his life until he delivered the message and until He made His religion victorious. But, despite this, he would still take the means of survival such as eating, drinking, wearing clothing, and seeking shelter.

This is a topic in which many people are mistaken. Some people even go so far as to leave off supplication out of their claim that there is no benefit in it because what is being asked for will surely come if it has truly been pre-ordained and if it was not pre-ordained it will never come. So what is the benefit of busying oneself with supplication? Then such people try to come up with clever responses by saying that: supplication is just a form of worship. The response to this mistaken person is that: you missed out on something, wherein lies the truth of the matter. It could have been pre-ordained that someone will receive what he is after if he acts upon the means, while he will not receive it if he leaves off taking the means; and supplication is from the greatest of means by

[13] The collective congregation of Muslims regardless of race, sex, tongue, color, or homeland.
[14] The chain contains some narrators who are not well-known.

> which people obtain what they are seeking after. This mistaken person is like the one who says: ‘If Allaah has pre-ordained that I will be full, I will be full whether I eat or not, and if He has not pre-ordained for me to be full, I will never be full whether I eat or not.' So what is the benefit of eating? And so on and so forth, on to all of the other invalid arguments that contradict the Wisdom of Allaah and His Shari’ah. And success is from Allaah.”

Allaah informs us of the story of Ya’quub and his children in *Surah* Yusuf (67-68):

> “And he said: ‘Oh my children, do not enter from one door, but rather enter from many different doors. And I will not benefit you in any way against Allaah. Judgment is but for Allaah. In Him do I trust and let those who trust, trust in Him.’ Then, when they entered as their father had ordered them, he did not benefit them in any way against Allaah. It was merely a need that Ya’quub found within himself that he fulfilled. Indeed he is knowledgeable of the knowledge We taught him, but most of mankind know not.”

‘Allaamah as-Sa’di said about these verses in his *tafsiir* (entitled *Taysiir al-Kariim ar-Rahmaan*):

> “When he sent Binyamiin with them he advised them that when they enter Egypt: “do not enter from one door, but rather enter from many different doors.” He did this because he feared that they would be afflicted by the *‘Ayn* (i.e. evil eye) because of their numbers and handsomeness, and because they were all the sons of one man. This is a type of **means** and, otherwise: “I will not benefit you in any way against Allaah.” Whatever has been pre-ordained must occur. “Judgment is but for Allaah.” The decision is His decision and the command is His command. Whatever He decides and commands must ‘be.’ “In Him do I trust,” **meaning: I depend on Him and not upon the means I advised you to take.** “And let those who trust, trust in Him,” because trusting in Allaah brings about all things that one could want and it repels all things that one could fear.”

Upon considering both worldly and heavenly means, it is true that an argument could be made to say that the heavenly means are still the more important of the two. Below are some notable verses which could be used to imply such a conclusion:

Allaah, the Exalted, said in *Surah* al-Baqarah (249-251):

> “Then when Taaluut set out with the army, he said: “Verily! Allaah will try you by a river. So whoever drinks thereof, he is not of me, and whoever tastes it not, he is of me, except him who takes in the hollow of his hand.” Yet, they drank thereof, all, except a few of them. So when he had crossed it, he and those who believed with him said: “We have no power this day against Jaaluut and his hosts.” **But those who knew with certainty that they were to meet their Lord, said: “How often a small group overcame a mighty host by Allaah’s Leave?” And Allaah is with the patient**. And when they advanced to meet Jaaluut and his

> forces, they invoked: "Our Lord! Pour forth on us patience, and set firm our feet and make us victorious over the disbelieving people." So they routed them by Allaah's leave and Daawuud killed Jaaluut, and Allaah gave him the kingdom and the wisdom and taught him of that which He willed. And if Allaah did not check one set of people by means of another, the earth would indeed be full of mischief. But Allaah is full of bounty towards mankind."

And He said in *Surah* at-Tawbah (25):

> "Truly Allaah has given you victory on many battlefields, and on the day of Hunayn **when you rejoiced at your great number, but it availed you naught** and the earth, vast as it is, was straitened for you, then you turned back in flight. Then Allaah sent down His tranquility on the Messenger and on the believers and sent down forces which you saw not and punished the disbelievers. Such is the recompense of the Disbelievers."

Of course these examples come with: 1) the context of a specific order from Allaah not to take certain means (like drinking water from the stream) – along with a reminder that all that is required of us is to take the means that are within our capability and at our disposal – or 2) the context of a chastisement from Allaah not to become over-confident in the earthly means; causing us to leave off trusting in Him. So it is not necessarily the case that heavenly means are inherently superior.

Besides, technically speaking, a case could also be made to say that leaving off the worldly means in Jihaad is actually, in itself, a form of leaving off the heavenly means:

Allaah, the Exalted, said in *Surah* al-Anfaal (60):

> "And **make ready against them all you can of power, including steeds of war** to threaten the enemy of Allaah and your enemy, and others besides whom, you may not know but whom Allaah does know. And whatever you spend in the cause of Allaah shall be repaid unto you and you shall not be treated unjustly."

This is a clear direct order from Allaah; therefore, fulfilling it is an obligation and a clear form of worship. Keeping that in mind, let's also remember that we concluded earlier, in our definitions of the different forms of means, that the main distinction between heavenly and earthly means is that heavenly means are more *obviously* recognizable as acts of worship than earthly ones. Here, in the case of preparations for Jihaad, we have a clear-cut verse which raises these earthly preparations from secondary acts of worship to full-blown obligations rivaling the other primary actions of worship such as: prayer, charity, migration, and combat.

For another example, Allaah, the Exalted, said in *Surah* an-Nisaa' (102):

> "When you Oh Messenger are among them and lead them in prayer let one party of them stand up with you taking their arms with them; when they finish their prostrations, let them take their positions in the rear and let the other party come up which have not yet prayed, **<u>and let them pray with you taking all the precautions and bearing arms</u>**. Those who disbelieve wish, if you were negligent of your arms and your baggage, to attack you in a single rush, but there is no sin on you if you put away your arms because of the inconvenience of rain or because you are ill, **<u>but take every precaution for yourselves.</u>** Verily, Allaah has prepared a humiliating torment for the disbelievers."

The two forms of means are intertwined even further. The effects of leaving off heavenly means are often seen through Allaah causing us to also leave off the appropriate worldly means; out of carelessness and neglect. Conversely, taking the heavenly means leads to Allaah inspiring us to take the appropriate worldly means:

Allaah, the Exalted, said in *Surah* al-Hashr (11-19):

> "Have you Oh Muhammad not observed the hypocrites who say to their friends among the people of the Book who disbelieve: "By Allaah if you are expelled, we too indeed will go out with you, and we shall never obey any one against you; and if you are attacked, we shall indeed help you." But Allaah is Witness that they are liars. Surely if they are expelled, **<u>never will they go out with them</u>**; and if they are attacked, **<u>they will never help them</u>**. And if they do help them, **<u>they will turn their backs</u>**, and they will not be victorious. Verily, you are more terrifying in their breasts than Allaah. That is because they are a people who comprehend not. They fight not against you together, except in fortified townships, or from behind walls. **<u>Their enmity among themselves is very great</u>**. You suppose that they are united, but **<u>their hearts are divided</u>**. That is because they are a people who understand not. They are like their immediate predecessors; they tasted the evil result of their conduct and for them is a painful torment. Just like Shaytaan when he says to man: "Disbelieve in Allaah," but when he disbelieves in Allaah Shaytaan says: **<u>"I am free of you</u>**, I fear Allaah, the Lord of the Worlds." So the end of both will be that they will be in the fire, abiding therein. Such is the recompense of the oppressors. Oh you who believe! Fear Allaah and keep your duty to Him and let every person look to what he has sent forth for the morrow, and fear Allaah. Verily, Allaah is All-Aware of what you do. **<u>And be not like those who forgot Allaah and He caused them to forget their ownselves. Those are the disobedient."</u>**

In this brief story we learn an important lesson: that those who are sinful and forget Allaah will be caused to forget that which is in their own interests. These interests are not only restricted to that which relates to the next life (i.e. performing righteous actions in order to enter paradise) but they also extend to worldly interests such as obtaining victory and establishment in the earth.

Here we see that the Hypocrites and the Jews failed to support one another, leaving each other defenseless victims of 'divide and conquer,' just as they failed to have patience in the face of their enemies, leaving their backs completely vulnerable to attack. Because of their disbelief, Allaah, the Exalted, caused them to forget what is in their best interests on the battlefield and in the political arena.

Allaah, the Exalted, said in *Surah* al-Anfaal (24):

> "Oh you who believe! Answer Allaah and His Messenger when he calls you to that which will give you life **and know that Allaah comes in between a person and his heart**.And verily to Him you shall be gathered."

In his *tafsiir*, at-Tabari mentioned different opinions of the Salaf about the explanation of this verse, including the opinion that:

> 'This means: He comes in between a person and his mind; till the point that he does not know what he is doing.'

He brought multiple narrations from Mujaahid with different wordings such as:

> "He comes in between a person and his mind," "Till He leaves him unable to think," "It is as if He said 'He *has* come in between,' leaving him unable to think," "If He comes in between you and your heart, how will you do anything?" "He comes in between the Kaafir and his heart, keeping him from doing any good."

At-Tabari held the opinion that the wording should remain general and open to all of the valid interpretations:

> "Abu Ja'far said: the most correct opinion is that Allaah is informing us that He owns the hearts of His slaves more than themselves and He can come in between them and their hearts whenever He wishes. And if Allaah comes in between someone and his heart, to prevent him from understanding something, such a person will never find a way of understanding that thing. If this is the meaning of this verse, it is broad enough, therefore, to embrace all of the following opinions: "He comes between a Believer and disbelief and a Disbeliever and belief," and "He comes between someone and his mind," and "He comes between someone and his heart such that he can not believe or disbelieve except by His permission." It includes all of these meanings because whenever He comes between a slave and his heart, he will not be able to understand anything with that heart as I explained. It should also be pointed out that Allaah made this general by saying: "Know that Allaah comes in between a person and his heart," informing that He comes in between someone and his heart without specifying a particular meaning from those that I mentioned, while all of them are possible. Therefore, this verse must remain general until a substantial proof can be provided to show otherwise."

To fully understand the relevance of this verse to the point at hand, it should be contemplated in context with the surrounding verses that discuss how Allaah causes the Disbelievers to become defeated, despite their quantitive advantages, by causing their plots to be of naught (verse 18 and 19 of surah al-Anfaal). This is often due to them not applying sound judgment and taking the appropriate worldly means.

Allaah, the Exalted, also goes on to remind us that the exact opposite is true. If we were to obey Him and believe in Him He will grant us a criterion by which to judge in our affairs and we will thereby become victorious.

Allaah, the Exalted, said in *Surah* al-Anfaal (29):

> "Oh you who believe, if you obey and fear Allaah, He will grant you a criterion."

Ibn Kathiir said in his Tafsiir:

> "Ibn 'Abbaas, as-Suddi, Mujaahid, 'Ikrimah, adh-Dhahhaak, Qataadah, and Muqaatil bin Hayyaan said: "criterion" means: 'a way out.' Mujaahid added: 'In this life and the next.' In one narration, ibn 'Abbaas said: 'salvation,' and in another: 'victory.' Muhammad ibn Ishaaq said that: "criterion" means 'a means to discern truth from falsehood.' **This tafsiir of ibn Ishaaq is more general than the previous opinions and includes all of them by default. Whoever fears Allaah, by acting upon His orders and staying away from His prohibitions, will be guided to know truth from falsehood. This, therefore, will be the cause of his victory, his salvation, and his way out, in this life, and it will also be the cause for obtaining bliss in the next.** Similarly, having his sins forgiven (and having them covered from the view of mankind) is the cause for obtaining Allaah's great rewards. This is exactly as Allaah said: "Oh you who believe, fear Allaah and believe in His Messenger, He will give you two measures of His mercy, He will grant you a light to walk therein, and He will forgive your sins. Indeed Allaah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (al-Hadiid: 28)"

Directly following this verse, Allaah reminds us of the story in which the plots of the Disbelievers were foiled by the cunning that Allaah, the Exalted, had divinely inspired to the Prophet (S). The Disbelievers had planned to kill the Prophet (S) by sending a "delegation" consisting of an armed man from each tribe to his (S) house at night. He (S) left his house before they could successfully gather to kill him and, instead of surprising the Prophet (S), the Disbelievers found 'Ali (R) lying asleep in his (S) bed.

This is the exact war cunning (which is a form of worldly means) that we hope will be instilled within us if we obey Allaah and His Messenger (S).

Allaah the Exalted said at the closing of *Surah* al-'Ankabuut (69):

> "As for those who strive hard in Our cause, We will surely guide them to Our paths. And verily Allaah is with the good-doers."

And some of the scholars of *Tafsiir*[15] explained this verse to mean:

> 'Those who act upon what they know, Allaah will guide them to that which they do not know.' It is also said that the meaning is: 'We will increase them in guidance,' as Allaah said: "And Allaah increases in guidance those who accept the guidance." (Maryam: 76) And He said: "So be afraid of Allaah; and Allaah teaches you." (al-Baqarah: 282)'

The obvious conclusion…

Although, Allaah, the Exalted, is capable of simply saying: 'Be,' and it is, He has created this universe to abide by certain laws. He decreed that every thing, or occurrence, should have an originating cause, while He alone is free of such. He is the Cause of all causes.

We can see this fact in the way that Allaah created the heavens and the earth through a long, gradual process. We can also see this in the way Allaah often ordered His Prophets to take the means available to them in each situation, no matter how insignificant those means may be, instead of simply decreeing that a miracle should occur without any effort on their behalf.

Musaa was often ordered to throw or strike with his staff, as a final effort to take the means available to him before the miracles occurred. Maryam was also ordered to try to shake the tree in order for the dates to fall down to her in her desperate state. The Prophet (S) threw sand in the direction of the Polytheists and Allaah caused it to enter the eyes of each of them. The examples of this are numerous.

The lesson to be learned here is that:

1) **The Qur'aan guides us to taking the physical worldly means that we have at our disposal, along with taking the heavenly means.**
2) **In fact, taking the worldly means is a clear direct order, making it in effect a form of heavenly means.**
3) **Moreover, in proportion to the manner in which one takes the heavenly means, taking the worldly means will be facilitated, or frustrated, for him.**

[15] The science of explaining the verses of the Qur'aan; through use of: other verses, Prophetic *hadiiths*, statements of companions or prominent scholars, and the Arabic language.

Examples of erroneous notions found amongst the Mujaahidiin:

1. **The most important notion to *expel* from our minds is the notion that the presence of *tamkiin* (dominance) and victory *necessarily* means that Allaah is pleased with us** and that we, therefore, must have taken all of the proper means and must be in complete obedience to Him. In fact, victory is nothing but a test from Allaah to see whether or not we will give thanks and establish His *Shari'ah*[16] completely.

   Allaah, the Exalted said in *Surah* Yunus (13-14):

   "And We have destroyed the generations before you when they oppressed and when their messengers came to them with clear signs, but they were not to believe. That is how We reward the criminal folk. Then We made you successors in the earth, after them, **<u>to see how you will act</u>**."

   Allaah also said, about those to whom He gave permission to fight Jihaad, in *Surah* al-Hajj (41):

   "The ones who, when We give them *tamkiin* in the earth, they establish the prayer, give the obligatory charity, and command the good and forbid the evil. And to Allaah belongs the end of all affairs."

   Contrary to this erroneous notion, for those who do not fulfill the above criteria (of establishing the prayer etc.), victory and prosperity can even be a form of punishment. Such a case is called *istidraaj* (i.e. being led along only to fall headlong into a trap).

   Allaah, the Exalted, said in *Surah* al-'Araaf (182-183):

   "And those who belied Our signs, We will do *istidraaj* of them in a way that they do not expect. And I give them respite. Indeed My plot is solid."

   Ibn Kathiir said in his *tafsiir*:

   "It means that: He opens for them the doors of sustenance and the means of livelihood in this life, until they become deceived by that and believe that they are upon the right way. This is just as Allaah said: "When they forgot what they had been reminded with We opened up for them the doors to everything, until they are happy about what they were given, We take them by surprise leaving them completely devastated. And so the line of the oppressors was cut off. And all praises are due to Allaah the Lord of the Worlds." (al-An'aam: 44-45) This is why Allaah said: "I give them respite," in other words: I give them more of what they are currently enjoying. "Indeed My plot is solid," Meaning: very strong. "

[16] The laws and legislations found within the Qur'aan and *Sunnah*.

Allaah also said in *Surah* al-Qalam (44-45):

"So leave Me to the one who belies this speech. We will do *istidraaj* of them in a way that they do not expect. And I give them respite. Indeed My plot is solid."

Ibn Kathiir said in his *tafsiir*:

"Allaah said: "So leave Me to the one who belies this speech," meaning: the Qur'aan. This is a severe warning. It means leave Me and him to each other, I know best how to do *istidraaj* of him and cause him to go further in his oppression. I give him respite and then I take him with the Grasp of the All-Mighty and All-Capable. This is why He said; "We will do *istidraaj* of them in a way that they do not expect" in other words: while they are unaware. They believe that all of this is honor bestowed upon them from Allaah; while it is actually a humiliation. Allaah said: "Do they believe that what we give them of wealth and children…that We are rushing to give them good? Rather they are unaware." (al-Mu'minuun: 55-56) And Allaah said: "When they forgot what they had been reminded with We opened up for them the doors to everything, until they are happy about what they were given, We take them by surprise leaving them completely devastated. And so the line of the oppressors was cut off. And all praises are due to Allaah the Lord of the Worlds." (al-An'aam: 44-45) This is why Allaah said: "And I give them respite. Indeed My plot is solid" meaning: I delay for them and give them time and all of that is from My plotting. "Indeed My plot is solid," meaning: grave for those who go against My command, and belie My Messengers, and have the audacity to disobey Me. It is reported in the *Sahiihayn* [i.e. Bukhaari and Muslim] that Allaah's Messenger (S) said: "Indeed, Allaah, the Exalted, gives the oppressor respite such that when He takes him, He doesn't let him go." Then he recited: "This is the Grasp of your Lord when He takes the villages in His Grasp. Indeed His Grasp is painful and severe" (Huud: 102)"

It took 950 years for the people of Nuuh to see the repercussions of their deeds; while, even longer still, some people may not ever find out that they were on a misguided path until the Day of Judgment. Allaah says about them in *Surah* al-Kahf (104) that they will be punished on the Day of Judgment while they believe that they had been doing something good during their stay in this life.

2. The second notion is that the 'love for martyrdom' is more important than taking means such as:

Having a strategy
Planning
Preparing logistics
Using tactics (trenches, cover, formations, body armor, etc.)
Avoiding injuries and casualties

It is vital for us to understand that our goal as Muslims is not so much to seek martyrdom as it is to seek to raise the Word of Allaah, which usually leads one down a martyrdom-prone path. If martyrdom was truly the main objective, a great Mujaahid like Khaalid bin al-Waliid would not have been incapable of making sure that he was mortally wounded on any of the hundreds of battlefields upon which he fought; instead of dying on his bed from illness.

It was reported in the *Sahiihayn* that Abu Musaa al-Ash'ari said:

"A man came to the Prophet (S) and said: 'Oh Allaah's Messenger, a man fights for war booty, another man fights to be mentioned, and another fights for his place to be seen, so who is in the path of Allaah?' He said: "Whoever fights that the Word of Allaah be uppermost, he is in the path of Allaah.""

The Prophet (S) did not tell him that 'the one who fights to become a martyr' is the one who is truly in the path of Allaah. Rather, truly being a martyr requires that someone be killed while sincerely trying to further the cause of Allaah.

This distinction, despite its slightness, is extremely important. It is the difference between having a goal that requires us to take the worldly means and between having a goal that only requires us to walk headlong into the bullets.

One must not forget that leaving off these worldly means eventually leads to defeat. More importantly, neglect and carelessness regarding this matter could actually be a sign that we are also leaving off some other heavenly means.

3. **The third notion is that it is favorable to take *inappropriate* means, or halfway measures, based upon what is dictated by the concept of '*maslahah*' (literally the term means: that which is beneficial; but it is usually used under false pretexts).** This leads, in effect, to not fully prohibiting the *haraam* (forbidden) things or ordering the *waajib* (obligatory) ones, while having the means to do so.

   The underlying reason for this is a lack of trust in Allaah.

   In contrast, we see the Prophet (S) and Abu Bakr (R) upholding the obligatory commands of the *Shari'ah* despite all odds, even in the face of formidable enemies that could destroy the very foundation of the Muslim State.

   Muslim reported in his *Sahiih*:

   From Hudhayfah bin al-Yamaan that he said: 'I was not prevented from witnessing the battle of Badr except that I departed with my father – Husayl – and the Disblievers of Quraysh caught us. They said: 'You want to go to Muhammad.' We said: 'We do not want to go to him. We only want to go to al-Madiinah.' So they took from us a covenant and an oath by Allaah that we will only go to al-Madiinah without fighting alongside of him. When we reached Allaah's Messenger (S) and we told him this news he said: "Both of you should depart. We will uphold their covenant and we will ask Allaah for help against them."'

   The dire condition of the Muslims at the time of Badr, and their need for men and reinforcements, is known to all.

   Bukhaari reported from ibn 'Abbaas in his *Sahiih*, about the severity of the situation:

   'The Prophet (S) said on the day of Badr: "Oh Allaah, I ask You by Your covenant and promise. Oh Allaah, if You wish it so, You shall not be worshipped again [on earth after today]." Then Abu Bakr took him by his hand and told him: 'That is sufficient.' Then the Prophet (S) came out [of his tent] saying: "The group shall be defeated, and they will turn their backs in flight." (al-Qamar: 45)'

   So, if it were permissible to bypass the obligations of the *Shari'ah* in order to save Muslim lives and to save the Islaamic State, this would have been a prime situation to do so.

   We can also see this same resolve in Abu Bakr (R), during the most trying moments for the Muslim *Ummah*, after the death of the Prophet (S). Despite the fear that the Islaamic State would be overrun by apostates, Abu Bakr (R) fulfilled the command of the Prophet (S) by sending out the army of Usaamah.

   Ibn Kathiir said in al-Bidaayah wan Nihaayah:

‘The Haafidh Abu Bakr al-Bayhaqi informed us that Abu ‘Abdullaah al-Haafidh informed us that Abu al-‘Abbaas Muhammad bin Ya’quub narrated to us that Muhammad bin ‘Ali al-Maymuuni narrated to us that al-Firyaabi narrated to us that ‘Abbaad bin Kathiir narrated to us from Abu [az-Zinaad from] al-‘Araj from Abu Hurayrah that he said:

‘By Allaah, the One who there is no other deity but Him, if it were not that Abu Bakr became the *Khaliifah*, Allaah would no longer be worshipped.’ Then he said it a second and a third time. It was said to him: ‘What are you saying Oh Abu Hurayrah?!’ He said: ‘The Prophet (S) sent out the army of Usaamah, which consisted of seven-hundred fighters, to *Shaam*. When they reached Dhu Khashab the Prophet’s (S) soul was taken and the Arabs around al-Madiinah apostatized. His (S) companions then gathered around Abu Bakr and said: ‘Oh Abu Bakr call back that army. Would you send those to Rome while the Arabs around al-Madiinah have apostatized?!’ He said: ‘By the One, there is no other deity but Him, if the dogs were to drag around the legs of the wives of the Prophet (S) I would not hold back an army that the Prophet (S) sent out nor would I untie a flag that the Prophet (S) tied.’ So he sent out Usaamah, and he (i.e. Usaamah) did not pass by a tribe that had thought of apostatizing except that they said: ‘If these people didn’t have any strength they wouldn't send out an army like this. We will leave them to go meet Rome.’ So they (i.e. Usaamah's army) met Rome and they defeated them by killing them and returning safely. Seeing this, the tribes stayed upon Islaam.’

[Ibn Kathiir said:] This ‘Abbaad bin Kathiir, I think he is [ar-Ramli] because al-Firyaabi is narrating from him, and he is *mutaqaarib al-hadiith* (i.e. his hadiiths are close to those of the trustworthy narrators). As for the Basri Thaqafi one, he is *matruuk al-hadiith* (i.e. his hadiiths have been left by the other narrators of hadiith). And Allaah Knows best.’

‘Abbaad bin Kathiir ar-Ramli’s hadiiths are actually *closer* to the hadiiths of the *weak* narrators than to the hadiiths of the *trustworthy* ones. This hadiith has also been narrated by Sayf bin ‘Umar, who has been accused of lying, and there is another *mursal* chain from az-Zuhri reported in the *Musannaf* of ‘Abdur Razzaaq. At any rate, despite the weakness of the chain, the story is considered historically accurate, and it is completely in line with the *usuul* (foundational principles) of the *Shari’ah*.

Let us remember, that leaving off these heavenly means (even under the pretext of *maslahah*) could lead to the punishment of Allaah blinding us; causing us not to take the *proper* worldly means. However, upholding the commandments of Allaah, will only bring us His blessings and victory.

<u>The contention between 1) upholding our principles in the face of all odds, while running the risk of annihilation, and 2) between applying *maslahah*, while running the risk of falling into *istidraaj*…brings us to the topic of defining 'victory':</u>

The Shaykh and Mujaahid Yusuf al-'Uyayri, may Allaah accept his martyrdom, said:

> "<u>The fifth constant: Victory is not only defined as military supremacy</u>
>
> Many Muslims think that everyone who performs the obligation of Jihaad as an act of worship must be given material victory on the battlefield. They think that Allaah legislated Jihaad and made it the cause for material victory alone. This is because many people restrict the meaning of victory to only apply to military supremacy and victory on the battlefield.
>
> But Allaah, the Exalted, legislated this act of worship for us without guaranteeing that the one who engages in its extreme hardships will become victorious. On the contrary, Allaah, the Exalted, even affirmed military defeat for the Muslims in some instances by saying: "If you are afflicted by injury, the people were also afflicted by a similar injury. And so are the days that we dole out amongst the people." (Aal 'Imraan: 140) This verse was revealed in order to emphasize that this is a universal law. Moreover, this universal law was emphasized after the military defeat incurred by the Muslims at the battle of Uhud.
>
> If only the people widened their perspective and understood the true meaning of victory they would know that any one who engages in the highest peak of Islaam can never lose. Rather, such a person is victorious regardless of the situation – even if he is captured or killed. If we gave victory the true meaning it deserves – due to pondering over the proofs of the Book and the *Sunnah* – we would find that the Islaamic *Ummah* as a whole can never lose by engaging in Jihaad. Rather, instead, Jihaad is profitable at all times even if it seems, at times, to be otherwise on the battlefield."
>
> "Indeed when the Mujaahid is firm upon the path of Jihaad and upon the principles of this act of worship – no matter what afflicts him of hardship and no matter what disheartening events occur – this fact alone is to be considered a victory in of itself. Allaah, the Exalted, says: "Allaah makes firm those who believe with the firm word in this temporal life as well as in the Hereafter. And Allaah causes the oppressors to go astray. And Allaah does what He wills." (Ibraahiim: 27) Therefore, whoever is firm upon the path of Jihaad and continues in performing this act of worship, and therefore becomes of the people mentioned in this verse…isn't that something that should be considered as a victory in his favor? Of course it is, by Allaah!

How many times have we seen people engage in Jihaad, and be given victory on the battlefield, but then they lose their principles and their beliefs change. Then they decide to serve their desires and temporal wishes due to what they came across on the path of Jihaad. How many others have we seen that were not afflicted with the types of hardship that afflicted others like them – who have still not ceased to be firm upon Jihaad [despite these afflictions] – and they were also not defeated on the battlefield, but yet this temporal life still managed to defeat their principles and their beliefs. They were turned astray by corrupt forces that they became slaves to; then they went on to become traitors and to seek to pardon their defeated beliefs with a thousand excuses. Isn't this the true defeat? And isn't firmness upon one's principles the true victory?"

"When the Mujaahid is firm upon the path of Jihaad and upon the beliefs and principles for which he is fighting, he has in fact achieved the victory of principles and the supremacy of creed and belief over two groups:

<u>The first group</u>: He is victorious in his principles over the principles of misguidance espoused by the people of innovation and deviation who are far astray and who have tainted the pure texts by twisting them from their original meanings in an effort to turn the Mujaahid away from his principles. So, if he is persistent and continues to fight for his principles without listening to the doubts of the people of misguidance and betrayal, he has achieved victory over them.

<u>The second group</u>: He is victorious in his principles over the principles of the people of disbelief, heresy, and apostasy. So, when he announces openly that he wishes to die in the path of his beliefs, and that death will not change his beliefs in the least… that is to be considered from the greatest forms of victory.

This magnificent victory becomes clear by observing the scene in which the magicians of Pharaoh were threatened with death and crucifixion after openly announcing their belief. Pharaoh said: "I will cut off your arms and legs from opposite sides and I will crucify you upon the trunks of trees and then you shall know who is the most severe in torment and the most lasting." They responded with the honor of believers and with unrivaled preeminence: "They said: 'We will not place you above what has come to us of clear signs or above the One who has created us. So judge, then, as you wish. You can only pass judgments in this temporal life.'" (Taa haa: 71-72) And they responded in another verse by saying: "You do not have enmity for us except that we have believed in the signs of our Lord when they came to us. Oh our Lord, bestow upon us patience and take our souls as Muslims." (al-'Araaf: 126) Allaah is the Most Great! Yes, by Allaah! This is indeed the greatest victory: firmness upon one's principles until death.

This victory is also made clear by the story of Khubayb (R) when he was tied up at the hands of the Disbelievers of Quraysh and there were only moments between him and death. In the narration of Abu al-Aswad from 'Urwah it is reported that: "When they began to strike him with their weapons while he was tied they called

out to him: 'Would you like that Muhammad was in your place?' He said: 'No by Allaah the Magnificent! I do not wish that he take even a thorn to his foot on my behalf.'"[17] Allaah is the Most Great! How magnificent and exalted is such a victory!

How many nations were killed and annihilated without Allaah mentioning and praising them as He praised the ones whom He described as obtaining the greatest of victories? The Disbelievers gave the people of the trench two choices: either to leave their religion or to die by being burned alive while firm upon their principles. But the fire of this life was not enough to turn them away from their religion. They chose their principles over safety from the fire. They plunged into the fire like locusts defiantly, without being terrorized by the sight of the huge fires, but rather instead they continued to walk into the fires in order to obtain victory. When one woman hesitated and briefly forgot the true meaning of victory, Allaah caused her nursing child to explain to her the true meaning of victory by saying to her – as it is reported in *Sahiih* Muslim – : "Oh mother, have patience, because you are upon the truth." So she jumped into the fire and she was victorious along with her nursing baby.

Allaah caused their memory to be praised eternally in a manner that He did not praise any other people before or after them by saying: "Indeed those who believed and performed righteous deeds, for them are gardens under which rivers flow. That is the great success." (al-Buruuj: 11)

So any believer who forgets the meaning of true victory like that woman, this verse, this praise, and this testimony are a clarification of the meaning of victory and a reminder for them."

"The sixth constant: defeating a Muslim is not through killing him

Anyone who reads the meanings of victory that we have just mentioned will inevitably have a question in his mind that goes along the lines of: 'If the killing of a Muslim at the hand of a Disbeliever is not considered a defeat, but rather a victory for the Muslim, then what is the description of a battle in which it could be said that the Muslims were actually defeated?'

The answer to such a question is indeed a lengthy one, but we shall mention a few types of defeat in this section in order to clarify for the reader the meaning of defeating a Muslim, and in order to clarify that his defeat is not through killing him, but rather through other means even if he is allowed to remain alive in a good condition.

[17] This hadiith is *mursal* (from both the routes of 'Urwah bin az-Zubayr and Musaa bin 'Uqbah). Both chains also contain weak narrators (ibn Lahi'ah and ibn Abii Uways). They can be found in *al-Mu'jam al-Kabiir* of at-Tabaraani and *Dalaa'il an-Nubuwa* of al-Bayhaqi.

In order to emphasize the most important meanings of defeat we reiterate here that the battle which rages between mankind on this earth is nothing more than a battle of principles that has been translated by the different nations into a battle of bodies; especially in reference to the battle between the Muslims and the Disbelievers. In addition to that, the battle of bodies is also something that Allaah has ordered us to do. But regardless, since the foundation of the battle is a battle of principles and beliefs, surely compromising on these principles and beliefs must be considered a defeat even if the bodies remain in existence. Indeed, there is no longer any benefit in the existence of these bodies once they have become void of principles and beliefs.

The meanings of defeat:

The first of the meanings of defeat is to follow the religion of the Disbelievers or to follow after their whims…"

"The second meaning of defeat is to appease the Disbelievers by compromising upon principles…"

"The third meaning of defeat is to lean towards the Disbelievers and the people of falsehood…""

Now, in light of these aforementioned principles, this study shall aim not only to explain the intricacies of the Prophet's (S) grand strategy, but also to prove that the Prophet (S) was not given victory over the Disbelievers *simply* due to the fact that he was taking the heavenly means of true, sincere, belief in Allaah. Rather, He (S) was actually given victory because he was *also* outdoing them in taking the worldly means that Allaah, the Exalted, had commanded him to take.

The Strategic Environment:

Geography

At the time of the Prophet (S) the Arabian Peninsula was wedged between two rival superpowers; Rome and Persia. This rivalry amongst giants, along with the disorganized and feud ridden culture of the Arabs, left it very difficult for any one tribe, or nation, to claim supremacy over the Arabian Peninsula. This is especially true of the interior of the Peninsula which was protected by vast deserts (unlike the rims which were often under the direct rule of the Romans, the Persians, or even the Ethiopians)[18]. This lack of unified government left the Peninsula an optimal safe haven out of reach of any of the crushing powers of the time. This geographical advantage, along with the cultural factor of constant disarray amongst the Arabian tribes, guaranteed that there would almost always be a willing ally from amongst the swarm, and rarely ever would a force be capable of attacking any of the rest with impunity.

Later, proximity to Christian Abyssinia on the African continent would also be an important plus in sheltering the Muslims from aggressors[19].

The geographic positioning of the Peninsula also rendered it an important trade route between Europe and Asia. In addition to the effects this had on the economy, it also caused an extreme mixture of cultures. This factor made the Peninsula a fitting stage for the arrival of an array of the world's religions and, therefore, a fitting battleground for theological contest.[20]

On a smaller scale, Madiinah was also positioned along the trade routes between *Shaam* and Makkah making it ideal for wreaking havoc on caravans.

The Peninsula is also firmly situated between Africa, Asia, and Europe. This central location on the 'World Island' makes for an easy launching pad into any of the continents should any power manage to control it. The fact that it is also surrounded by water, and

[18] For more about this and other background information, see *ar-Rahiiq al-Makhtuum* (The Sealed Nectar) of al-Mubaarakpuri (particularly the beginning chapters, p. 6-30).
[19] The first migrations of the Muslims were to Ethiopia, under the rule of an-Najjaashi (R) (Or the Negus, the title for Ethiopian kings. His real name was Ashamah), before the great migration to al-Madiinah. *Ar-Rahiiq al-Mukhtuum* p. 74.
[20] Living amongst the Arabs were Christians (like Waraqah bin Nawfal, al-Bukhaari no. 3), Jews (though obviously not of Arab origin), Zoroastrians (in Bahrain, al-Bukhaari no. 64, 2987), Pagans (most of the population), and those who ascribed to the Monotheism of Ibraahiim (AS) (like Zayd bin 'Amr bin Nufayl, al-Bukhaari no. 3614,3615,3616).

the fact that its shape forms two of the worlds most important straits, would later prove important once sea power was realized[21].

Climate

The climate of the Arabian Peninsula is extremely dry; making agriculture difficult to say the least. Even herding camels or other livestock requires access to wells and oases. This of course leads to a pastoral, Bedouin lifestyle along with constant tribal fighting over resources; water and grazing lands. These factors give way to the development of a warrior society which, in the absence of other unifying factors, is a society pit against itself.

Some of the ironic advantages of having such a society (namely the creation of a safe haven) have been highlighted above, but one could also imagine how this could lead to an inclination - especially amongst the weak - to accept the message of any movement that calls for justice and generosity[22]. Feuding tribes, constantly at war for ages, would also more than likely be ready to accept an arbitrator to make peace between them and allow them both the opportunity to put their differences aside honorably[23].

Having this type of society also meant that once an Arab had been converted to Islaam and subscribed to its values, his heritage of fighting - which meant at times fighting to the death for nothing more than honor - makes him the ultimate warrior. A skilled, battle hardened, man with a mission.

Natural Resources

As can be discerned from the discussion of geography and climate, the Arabian Peninsula was not abundant in natural resources, leaving it extremely conflict prone.

In the way of agriculture, dates were easily harvested due to the resilience of the date palm in the face of the harsh desert environment. Other fruits and grains, however, like grapes, pomegranates, figs, olives, wheat, barely, and corn were no doubt present[24], but not in the same wide abundance as dates.

Cities with agriculture had the advantage of not having to depend entirely upon trade for food security; therefore allowing for *possible* resilience in the face of a siege. Paradoxically, however, farmers also had to deal with the disadvantage of being tied to defending their land. The prospect of having their agriculture burned to the ground left many farmers weak hearted and ready to pay taxes to the more aggressive, and less static, Bedouins.

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[21] After the death of the Prophet (S) Islaam almost simultaneously expanded into Asia, Africa, and towards the doors of Europe.
[22] See *Hilf al-Fudhuul* (The Pact of Virtue) for instance. Refer back to *ar-Rahiiq al-Makhtuum* p. 44.
[23] See the building of the Ka'bah and the feud that almost ensued if not for the arbitration of the Prophet (S). Ibid p.47.
[24] Mention of most of these can be found in the Qur'aan.

In the way of livestock, camels were coveted for their hides, milk, meat, and as a means of transportation. Other forms of cattle and pack animals were also in abundance.

Things like wood, cloth, silk, spices, perfumes, and many other items, were few and far between, rendering them precious commodities. Most of these were only acquirable through trade, which had a large role to play in making Makkah, and by default Qurasyh, extremely influential in the Arabian Peninsula. The need for trade meant that visiting the Ka'bah in Makkah was not only a religious journey for most of the Arab pagan pilgrims, but it was also a lucrative source of income and a means of obtaining valuable goods[25]. Therefore, anyone in charge of Makkah was awarded supremacy in religious, financial, and therefore political affairs.

Additionally, since Makkah was off-limits to aggression - and since the months leading up to, the months during, and the months after the pilgrimage were also held sacred - the inhabitants of Makkah were generally free to prosper economically without fear of aggression or attack from their neighbors[26].

Population

The population of the Arabian Peninsula was relatively small as is illustrated by the fact that a large and influential tribe like Quraysh might brag that they were able to produce one-thousand fighters for a battle[27].

The majority of this small population was spread out. Most of the people were not city dwellers but rather chose to roam in the desert as Bedouins.

The birth rate was probably high, due to marrying multiple wives and putting a focus on having many children, but diseases[28] and war probably kept the population growth at a small percentage.

Boys were highly favored over girls, leading to many female infant deaths[29]. Once again, since there is no mention of a deficiency in females, war probably kept the male to female proportion in check.

These population trends probably had a hand in the stunted evolution of warfare in the Peninsula, in comparison with the technological advances of the huge armies amassed by the superpowers of the times[30].

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[25] The twin motives of *Hajj* – both the religious and financial motives – continued to exist even after the Conquest of Makkah. See the explanation of verse 198 of *Surah* al-Baqarah.
[26] See the verses of *Surah* al-Baqarah (191 and 217).
[27] Such was their number on the day of Badr. See *ar-Rahiiq al-Makhtuum* p.160.
[28] The children of Makkah were sent to breastfeed away from the city for fear of disease. See the story of Haliimah as-Sa'diyyah in *ar-Rahiiq al-Makhtuum* p.36. Al-Madiinah was also known for its particular fever. See Bilaal's sickness shortly after migration (al-Bukhaari no. 1790) as well as the story of the people of 'Uraynah (al-Bukhaari no. 231).
[29] See the explanation of verses 8-9 of *Surah* at-Takwiir.

A small population meant that there was no option of having a standing army; a warrior class separate from the rest of society. In effect, these blurred lines between soldier and laborer made the choice to go to war - as opposed to choosing peace and focusing on the economy - even more significant than it would be for a society with clear class distinctions and a self-sustainable economy[31]. This coupling of a lack of a standing army, and a self-sustaining economic base, meant that logistics was usually too large of a problem for long sustained campaigns or sieges[32].

Arabian warfare at that time, therefore, is probably best described as a series of quick raids, counter-raids, and ambushes. However, this is not to say that campaigns or sieges never happened[33], only that they were not the norm.

Skill Level

It should be obvious by now that every Arab was, by necessity, skilled not only in fighting, but also in one form or another of making a living.

Some people were skilled in agriculture and others in tending livestock. Most Arabs were proficient in business and trade, with some also making a living through smaller occupations like hunting, weaving, blacksmithing, firewood collection, and so forth.

This provided for an army that, although it was not professional or standing, was not in need of extensive centralized training or excessive efforts in gathering logistics. Each man was expected to arrive trained and ready with his own weapons, transportation, and rations. Of course there are definite cons to this approach, but when used properly, the pros it contains might possibly have even led to the fall of both the Romans and the Persians[34].

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[30] It has been postulated in "A Short History of War," that: "What made the birth of warfare possible was the emergence of societies with fully articulated social structures that provided stability and legitimacy to new social roles and behaviors. The scale of these fourth millennium urban societies was, in turn, a result of an efficient agricultural ability to produce adequate resources and large populations. It is no accident that the two earliest examples of these societies, Egypt and Sumer, were states where large-scale agricultural production was first achieved. The revolution in social structures that rested upon the new economic base was the most important factor responsible for the emergence of warfare." No doubt such grand societies can not be produced with such a small and spread out population.

[31] See the following verses: *Surah* al-Fath (11) and *Surah* at-Tawbah (24 and 42). The battle of Tabuuk was known for its hardships – leading many to refuse to be conscripted – partly because it was scheduled during harvest time (See the *hadiith* of Ka'b, al-Bukhaari no. 4156).

[32] Even after the Conquest of Makkah small expeditions were even difficult to fund. See the story of Abu 'Ubaydah bin al-Jarraah's excursion towards the coastline and the hunger they endured (al-Bukhaari no. 4102).

[33] The expedition of Tabuuk was fairly large considering the circumstances. The Prophet (S) also besieged at-Taa'if with twelve thousand Muslims, leaving him with a terrible supply line and a desert for foraging, from anywhere from half a month to a month an a half. Refer to *ar-Rahiiq al-Makhtuum*, p. 408, for details.

[34] In fact, a similar equation was actually depicted as the cause for the success of the 'ancient' Romans by Fabrizio in Machiavelli's "The Art of War," especially book one.

The following quote from "A Short History of War," though **long**, is extremely beneficial in examining the effectiveness of this form of military organization against the well-organized Roman army:

"As the Byzantine Empire was reaching the peak of its cultural and military power in the 7th century, deep within the deserts of Arabia a power was stirring that would change the face of the religious world forever. From the Byzantine point of view, the desert tracts of Arabia offered little in the way of rewards for conquest so, as with their Persian contemporaries, the eastern Romans made no effort to control the area. Arabia's only wealth lay in a few merchant towns, Mecca and Medina among them, that lay astride trade routes in the south. Into this world of Arab merchants and pastoral herdsmen was born Mohammed, the prophet of the religion of Islam, and a man destined to change the face of the world.

Beginning with a small band of zealot followers who started raiding the caravan routes, Mohammed forged the beginnings of an Arab army that within 100 years controlled all the territory from the Indus to the Atlantic along the North African littoral through Spain to the border of southern France. The armies of Islam, propelled by the *Jihad* belief that to die for the faith gained one paradise in the next life, gathered converts by the thousands wherever they marched. By 732, a century after Mohammed's death, the armies of Islam had destroyed the Persian Sassaniad empire, rolled back Byzantine power in the east to the Turkish border, incorporated all of Spain into the imperial realm, and narrowly missed overrunning France.

No one could have foreseen this staggering degree of military success, because for 300 years Arab armies were hardly armies at all. The early followers of Mohammed were desert tribes and clans called to the banner of the faith who fought in no organized formations. The idea of individual glory drove warriors to feats of great bravery, but at the same time made them impossible to organize as fighting units. For more than a century Arab soldiers fought with primitive weapons -- the personal sword, dagger, lance -- and wore no defensive armor or helmets. These conquering forces had no staff organization, no siegecraft capabilities, and no logistics trains. Tactics were almost nonexistent as these armies relied upon small hit-and-run raids, the *razzias*, and ambushes as their primary tactical maneuvers. Mobility was limited as most of the army moved on foot and fought as infantry accompanied by small contingents of camel cavalry. Even their size was small. The force that attacked and subdued Egypt (640-642) numbered no more than 4,000 men. But such corps of armed men could and did count on their numbers growing into the thousands as converts flocked to their cause along the line of march.

Arab military development was strongly influenced by experience and contact with other military cultures, most particularly by their wars with the Byzantines and Persians. In 635, an Arab chieftain, Khalid Ibn al-Walid, reorganized the Arab armies along Byzantine lines and created small combat units to replace the tribal levies. Whereas the tribal formations had deployed in long lines only three men deep, al-Walid created dense infantry formations after the Byzantine pattern. These new formations were organized into archer, infantry, and lance cavalry units and placed under the command of proven combat leaders who replaced the tribal and clan chiefs. He created the first Arab quartermaster corp, and even organized the women to carry knives and short swords to be used for stripping and dispatching the enemy wounded.

Horses were rare in Arabia (although not unknown), and the early Arab armies relied upon corps of special racing camels for transport and cavalry. The wars with the Persians brought the Arabs into contact with the horse, and the warriors of Allah were quick to grasp the importance of the horse as a military asset. Since Arab horses were brought into regular contact with their camel corps, the smell of the camel had no effect on them. The presence of camel cavalry, however, often spooked the horses of the enemy and weakened the opponent's force.

The empire reached its geographic zenith with its defeat by Charles Martel at the Battle of Poitiers in 732. Its expansionist phase over, the empire settled down to seven centuries of relative tranquility punctuated by violent caliphate rebellions and border wars. The defensive cast of the empire during this period was marked by the decentralization of the empire into a number of rival caliphates and the construction of military towns, *ribats*, which garrisoned special units of religious warriors to protect the empire and the faith. (Modern-day Rabat, Morocco derives from one of these fortress monasteries). At the same time the

Weapons

The Arabs were skilled in the usage of swords, knives, long bows, spears and javelins. At times they wore armor, helmets, and shields. They were even known to use more advanced weapon systems such as catapults on occasion.

Camels, horses, mules, and donkeys were also utilized for both riding and hauling. The first three were also used as cavalry and as a force multiplier.

Carts and other modes of transportation were not practical in the sandy and mountainous landscape and therefore not put to any use.

Fortresses were often built and stocked with food and projectiles. Hot water, fire, rocks, and so forth were often thrown over the walls to prevent penetration.

Despite the substantial presence of these fortresses in the Peninsula along with a sound knowledge of standard counter-measures (such as catapults for example), siegecraft was generally less sophisticated and underdeveloped due to logistical problems, as mentioned above.

Culture

The Arabs used to have a sense of morality, although they were far from saints. They used to magnify bravery, honesty, generosity, and eloquence. These values would later become the hallmark of chivalry; a name given to the lifestyle the Westerners learned through contact with the Muslims.

The leaders of the society were those who were the bravest in war, the richest in children, wives, camels, and gold, the most humanitarian amongst their people, the truest to their word, and the most poetic in speech[35].

Each sub-tribe was represented by at least one chief and these chiefs vied for supremacy of the tribe[36]. This pluralistic approach to government often made for a messy decision

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Arab armies adopted more and more Persian and Byzantine equipment and practices. By the 10th century, the chronicler al-Tabari recorded that the Arab warrior carried the following items of equipment: mail armor, breastplate, helmet, leg and arm guards, complete horse armor, small shield, lance, sword, mace, battle axe, bow case with two bows, a quiver of 30 arrows, and two spare bow strings. Added to this military capability was now a first-rate siegecraft capability. In equipment and tactics, the armies of Islam had become indistinguishable from the armies of Byzantium."

[35] A common phrase indicating Arab virtues can be found used in reference to the Prophet (S) and also Abu Bakr (R) (See al-Bukhaari no. 3 and 2175).
[36] See the discussion of *Daar an-Nadwah* (near the advent of the migration) in *ar-Rahiiq al-Makhtuum* p. 125.

making process. Meetings were held in gathering places akin to a form of town hall (*Daar an-Nadwah*). When civil deliberation broke down, war broke out.

Loyalty to tribe superseded all else. Once the chiefs had decided to go to war, there were no longer questions of right and wrong. Fighting would ensue, often leading to targeting those uninvolved in the dispute based on their tribal ascription, until one side yielded and honor was restored to the victor.

Once a truce had been made, or a pact of safety had been given, it was from the greatest of disgraces to break it. Such events would forever be remembered in poetry and in the minds of the neighboring tribes.

Islaamic Values, Interests, and Priorities:

The outstanding value system of the Muslims is well-known and common to other world religions. In fact, many of the values promoted by Islaam were already accepted and respected by the Arab culture, as well as the other surrounding civilizations[37]. This fact led many to convert simply at first word of Islaam[38].

This comparison, however, is in no way intended to undermine the important foundational differences between Islaam and the other world religions. These differences are both many and massive.

Muslims are ordered to obey, worship, and please Allaah in all affairs of their life. This is not limited to prayer in the Masjid or to family affairs at home, but rather Islaam is an entire socio-economic-political system. Obedience in any and all of these aspects is considered worship[39].

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[37] See the interview of Abu Sufyaan (R) by Hiraql of Rome, al-Bukhaari no. 7.

[38] See the conversion of Abu Dharr (R), al-Bukhaari no. 3328.

[39] It is of interest to bring up some of the malignant distortions and devious misrepresentations of Russell G. Rodgers in his *The Roar of Lions: Asymmetric Campaigns of Muhammad* found in "The U.S. Army and Irregular Warfare."

In his discussion of the true meaning of "Islaam" he defines it to mean political submission. He further defines this by saying: "Thus when Muhammad called those around him to Islam, he was calling on them to give submission primarily to himself and not to Allah (!!)." He continues to press this 'fact' numerous times in his work.

A supposed proof of such lunacy is the *hadiith* found in *Sahiih al-Bukhaari*: "Narrated Anas: Allah's Apostle went out towards the Khandaq (i.e. Trench) and saw the Emigrants and the Ansar digging the trench in the cold morning. They had no slaves to do that (work) for them. When the Prophet saw their hardship and hunger, he said, 'O Allah! The real life is the life of the Hereafter, so please forgive Ansar and the Emigrants." They said in reply to him, "We are those who have given the Pledge of allegiances to Muhammad for to observe Jihad as long as we live."

Anyone who has read any substantial amount of the Qur'aan would understand immediately that obeying the Prophet (S) over Allaah would immediately send a Muslim out of the fold of Islaam. Read for instance: al-Ahqaaf (9), al-Haaqqah (43-47), al-'Araaf (188, 203), ar-Ra'd (38), an-Najm (3-4), and so forth. The Prophet (S) also affirmed his subservience to Allaah, and the sin of elevating him above the status of

The number one priority and the highest level of worship in Islaam is establishing, and protecting the concept of *Tawhiid* (Islaamic Monotheism) upon the earth. Allaah is the sole Creator; He is the sole object of worship; He is the sole Legislator; and there is nothing similar to Him. The Word of Allaah must be uppermost within ourselves individually and within society as a whole.

Fulfilling these legislated laws of Allaah, individually and in society, by performing all the obligations and eschewing the prohibitions, is described as upholding the *Shari'ah*.

After upholding *Tawhiid*, and then the principles of the *Shari'ah* (the divinely legislated laws and limits), comes the priority of preserving the welfare of the Muslims. This includes providing the Muslims with the rights of security, prosperity, and justice. This prioritization (*Tawhiid*, then *Shari'ah*, then the Muslims' welfare) is purely for clarity. Although we can view these matters as taking priority one over the other for simplicity, in all reality they are in fact totally intertwined and inseparable.

An additional obligation upon Muslims - which is, in essence, a necessary requirement for realizing the above stated priorities - is to continue to spread the borders of Islaam and increase the power and income of the Islaamic state[40]. This is done through *da'wah* (propagation of the message), acceptance of the *jizyah* (a form of poll tax)[41], and outright

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Allaah's slave, on multiple occasions (al-Bukhaari no. 71, 2949, 3261, 2326, 3779, 5349, and so on). Furthermore, the *hadiith* brought by Rodgers goes on to explain the nature of the pledge of allegiance: "To observe Jihad as long as we live." It was also customary to make it clear in the pledge that Allaah alone is to be worshipped (which means obeying Him over all creation, including the Prophet (S)). This is observed in the verse of *Surah* al-Mumtahinah (12) and in numerous *hadiiths* (al-Bukhaari no. 18, 2049).

Mr. Rodgers – who is definitely not '*neighborly*' in his affections towards Islaam – has multiple other fictional stories – possibly obtained through '*Trolley*' the '*make-believe*' gossip train – which will also be alluded to and disproved in their appropriate places.

[40] There is no need for apology for this fact. It is often stated that: "Islaam was spread by the sword," as if such is to be an eternally damning fact. But how can spreading truth and justice ever be a shameful act? Once it's all said and done, the fact of the matter is that no religion exists without a powerful state to protect it anyway. The Christians were persecuted before Constantine's Rome, the Jews before Britain's Israel, and the Dalai Lama before America's Dharmsala. More interesting still, all of these 'heroes' and 'defenders of humanity' used defense of these religions as an excuse to continue to expand their empires. In short, there is no such thing as a utopian society in which new religions are welcomed without aggression and in which people prosper without guarding their interests by force.

With that noted, Islaam does not call for conversion at gun-point as practiced during the Christian Inquisition of Spain. In fact, Islaam's enemies are the first to point out that Islaam provided so much freedom to Jews and certain sects of Christians that they actually cheered on Islaam's advance (See "The Grand Strategy of the Byzantine Empire" of Edward N. Lutwak, chapter 9, p. 149 'Christians, Jews, and the Muslim Conquest.') Additionally, Islaam has also been known to spread to distant lands, completely transforming entire cultures, entirely by trade (On the East African Coast, for example, as well as the South East Asian Islands).

[41] Interestingly enough, the Islaamic poll-tax was one of the 'strategic enablers' of Islaam's spread according to Edward N. Luttwak in "The Grand Strategy of the Byzantine Empire." He said in his discussion of Islaam's twin victories over the Roman and Persian empires: "The impetuous Arab advances could have been nothing more than ephemeral raids, destined to be nullified by nativist resistance, had the invaders not

warfare for those who refuse either of the former. Moreover, this expansion must continue until the entire world has submitted to the superiority of Islaam and until the *Shari'ah* is the supreme law of the land[42].

As one can easily deduce, this equates to a virtual existential war with all other cultures and religions[43]. Consequently, having such a zero-sum perspective makes excluding most anything from the list of the Islaamic state's interests extremely difficult. The trick, then, is to prioritize these interests according to importance and urgency.

Some divine guidance can be found, in this regard, in verse 123 of *Surah* at-Tawbah: "Oh you who believe, fight those who are nearest to you from the Disbelievers and let them find harshness within you. And know that Allaah is with the pious."

Given the methods of warfare used in the era of the Prophetic *Siirah*, it would have been extremely difficult (primarily from a logistical standpoint) to focus on fighting enemies which lie beyond the surrounding, hostile, neighboring lands. Such a feat would not be made possible until the realization of air and sea power, or, alternatively, until the invention of IEDs and other asymmetrical tactics.

But, even with that said, this command was still not interpreted in an absolutely literal manner by the Prophet (S). In fact, he had already engaged the Romans in the battle of Mu'tah before the Arabian Peninsula - Makkah included - had been fully conquered.

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offered two very great and immediate advantages with their arrival. One was a drastic reduction in taxes that had become ruinously onerous. The other was truly paradoxical: by imposing discriminatory rules on all non-Muslims, the Muslim Arabs ended the arbitrary religious persecutions that had recently oppressed a majority of the inhabitants of Syria and Egypt." (Chapter 9, p. 144) He also said: "Muslim taxes could be low because the cost of Muslim rule was very low at first. The conquerors had neither a vast imperial overhead of bureaucrats and courtiers in the austerity of Mecca and Medina, nor were they trying to rapidly rebuild wrecked imperial armies as both the Byzantines and Sasanians were doing in those years. The taxes imposed by the Muslim authorities were both harshly discriminatory, because only non-Muslims had to pay most of them, and blessedly lower than the relatively well-documented Byzantine taxes, and known Sasanian taxes." (Chapter 9, p. 146)

[42] This is quite similar to the policy of the United States of America; to provide 'freedom of religion' while not allowing the Muslims to implement the laws of the *Shari'ah* amongst themselves. In America, Democracy and Capitalism must remain the supreme law of the land; even at the expense of Christianity. However, in Islaam, many of the laws of the Jews and the Christians pertaining to private life are left untouched so long as they do not encroach upon the public domain (such as 'Umar's (R) disregard of the Christians' practice of drinking alcohol in their homes or allowing them to prosecute their criminals, in cases of internal affairs, amongst themselves) or strongly conflict with the *Shari'ah* (as can be seen from 'Umar bin al-Khattaab's prohibition of the Zoroastrian practice of incest as well as the prohibition of exhibiting of crosses and sounding bells).

[43] It is imperative to understand that Islaam is the ***only*** law, tradition, and culture which ***must*** be followed to the exclusion of all others. It is the ultimate Truth. Its morals, virtues, and standards can not be derived, much less rivaled, simply through use of the mind. Therefore, no apology is needed when we assert that Islaam must prevail over all else. No shyness is required when we discuss its perfect laws (regardless of which 'superpower' stands in contempt). After all, no argument can be made to the contrary to the divine law of Allaah without resorting to man-made laws which are subject to error and change (An antidotal example is found in Howard Zinn's "The People's History of America." The 13th – 'Teller' – and 14th – 'Platt' – amendment of the U.S. constitution were made, within a few years of each other, first to *prohibit* and then to *allow* the invasion of Cuba; depending upon the changing fancies of the financial elite!!).

Therefore, the correct understanding of this verse is less of a literal command and more of a hint towards prioritizing enemies based on their importance and the threat they pose to the well-being of the Muslims and the Islaamic state.

The Strategic Appraisal:

Allies

Early on allies were extremely few and far between. The Muslims were no more than a handful and fewer still were either rich or influential amongst Quraysh[44]. (Abu Bakr (R) was, of course, by far the most valuable companion of the Prophet (S) in this regard [45].) Some of the less fortunate companions like Bilaal (R), who was a slave, were forced to suffer extreme torment at the hands of their Polytheist masters[46].

It was this harsh treatment and lack of acceptance that led the Prophet (S) to send those who did not have tribal security, but were still capable of travel, to Ethiopia to live under the protection of an-Najjaashi (R). This was not only an effort towards making it easier upon the new converts to Islaam, it was also a means of ensuring that the followers of Islaam would continue to exist in the earth should Quraysh take the decision to annihilate the weak population of Muslims in Makkah.

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[44] Here Rodgers likens the Prophet (S) to Moa Tse-tung in that many of his family members were the first to follow him. This is despite the fact that Rodgers himself pointed out that only 9 of 44 of the early companions were relatives of the Prophet (S). Only 3 of the 9 were close relatives. This is not only incredibly irrelevant, but it only serves to lead the reader into believing that the Prophet (S) was just 'another revolutionary,' without anything special or divine about his message. This is further reinforced by comments like: "With his marriage into a good family and access to his wife's wealth, Muhammad was able to develop an economic and political base for himself. He began to assert himself within the community, such assertion coming to a head when he proclaimed his prophetic calling for the god Allaah when he was forty years old." He also adds later: "There have been a number who have noted that Muhammad's teaching, and Islam in general, contains a strong dose of socialist philosophy." All of these statements are subliminal messages aimed at seducing the reader into believing that the message of the Prophet (S) was simply a run of the mill socialist revolution or a personal bid for power.

[45] Rodgers' sly remark: "Abu Bakr's support was crucial to Muhammad's movement, raising the question as to whether or not he may have been the true power behind the movement," is a rather amazing exhibition of grabbing for straws. I don't believe it deserves a long-winded refutation, though I felt it was representative of Rodger's style and worthy of a passing reference.

[46] Rodgers seeks to downplay this element of the *Siirah* by saying: "While violence against converts to Islam was minimal, with only two killed in seven years and even this is in dispute, some of the Quraysh finally lost patience with Muhammad." I don't know if the deaths of both of 'Ammaar bin Yaasirs parents (R) under severe torture, or the torment of Bilaal (R), or the near lynching of Abu Dharr (R) are disputed by any Muslim. Nor do I know of any law that makes murder and torture 'minimal' except in the case of the Americans' post-9/11 treatment of Muslims. Rodgers also shows his expert knowledge by informing us that: "Many of his biographers try to assert that Muhammad was in constant physical danger during this time, but in reality this is greatly exaggerated, as he had the protection of Abu Talib and the Hashim clan." In fact, he says: "Muhammad lived in a free country very much like a republic (!!)." It seems that the fact that the Prophet (S) was publicly strangled, (al-Bukhaari no. 3475) or that he was buried in entrails while prostrating, (al-Bukhaari no. 237) or the fact that he was threatened with having his neck stepped upon while prostrating (al-Bukhaari no. 4675) are all perfect examples of a free Republic like America. It all brings back memories of the freedoms and liberties of the Black Americans in the Southern States of the American 'Republic' within the lifetime of the living.

Despite this scarcity of allies in the early stages, the Prophet (S) *did,* at least, have his influential uncle, Abu Taalib, on his side[47]. Even though he never accepted Islaam he felt compelled by the honor code of the Arabs to support his nearest of kin. This gave the Prophet (S) at least some protection from within his own clan of Bani Haashim even if the rest of Quraysh remained hostile. In fact, the vast majority of Bani Haashim, with the notable exception of Abu Lahb, sided with the Prophet (S) even in the face of extreme adversity. This choice of theirs led them to receive severe alienation, boycott, and persecution from the other clans, despite the fact that they had yet to leave their disbelief.

However, when Abu Taalib died, the Prophet (S) was forced to set out in search of new allies from amongst the neighboring tribes. After many depressing rejections, finally the Aws and Khazraj of al-Madiinah agreed to give their pledge of allegiance. This of course led to the infamous Migration which gave way to a completely new stage in the *Siirah* of the Prophet (S). After this transition Islaam was no longer a religion without a state.

This upgrade to statehood, and its associated improvement in political clout, led to the acquisition of a different class of allies. The Jews of Madiinah, and its surrounding areas, were from the first of these newly acquired allies[48]. Although, it is technically correct to

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[47] This protection was, however, limited as we have mentioned in the previous footnote.

[48] In Rodgers' version of the *Siirah,* the Prophet (S) told the *Ansaar* to terminate their covenants with the Jews of al-Madiinah *secretly* (as it was "apparently kept from the Jewish tribe leaders"); while the Prophet (S) himself never made any treaties with Banu Qaynuqaa', Banu an-Nadhiir, or Banu Quraydhah. The irony of this opinion is that, on top of the fact that Mr. Rogers doesn't bring us any evidence to show that this absolving of contracts was kept from the Jews, Rogers himself informs us that the Prophet (S) "announced openly to the Jews that he intended to expel them from Madinah.' He also informs us that after the *Hijrah* the Prophet (S) went on to immediately commence the 'Covenant of Madinah,' in which he sought the covenant of the Jews (with the acceptance of some of the minor tribes). If the Jews did not understand that the Prophet (S) was now the effective leader of the *Ansaar*, why would some of them enter into a covenant which clearly placed Muhammad (S) at the helm and placed all the inhabitants of al-Madiinah under his leadership? It only makes sense that the Jews realized that the *Ansaar*, and al-Madiinah as a whole, had a new leader. In such a case, it would not have been wise of them to expect that this new leader would be bound by any previous tribal-based covenants. Moreover, even if they expected such an awkward proposal, it would never have been possible for the Prophet (S) to maintain both of the contradictory covenants of al-Aws and al-Khazraj since they were based upon the old feuds that existed between them (as well as the feuds that existed between the Jews themselves). See the *tafsiir* of verse 84-85 *Surah* al-Baqarah in *Tafsiir ibn Kathiir.*

One must also add here that it is not fair for Mr. Rogers to accept the *Siirah* of ibn Ishaaq as a valid source on some occasions and then go on to reject the parts he wishes to negate on others. Moreover, these rejections are commonly without any proof other than his own fanciful notions or insignificant commentary by contemporary Orientalists. In *Siirah ibn Hishaam* (the source of ibn Ishaaq's *Siirah*) we can find explicit mention of covenants with Banu Qaynuqaa', Banu an-Nadhiir, and Banu Quraydhah along with the stories of how each one of them broke these covenants.

More importantly, if Mr. Rogers chooses to outright reject this history, without any grounds for such, it is quite wicked of him to then go on to accuse the Prophet (S) of always violating these 'alleged' treaties that supposedly don't exist. If there truly were no treaties as Mr. Rogers asserts, why then must it be a demonic act for the Prophet (S) to declare war on his enemies? This type of deviousness is characteristic of all of Mr. Roger's other commentary.

For example, he says: "Evidence within Islamic sources indicates that Muhammad took measures to provoke such conflicts, and then used minor incidents to justify the suppression or destruction of his enemies." While this sounds more like the Gulf of Tonkin, Pearl Harbor, and other such American escapades, Mr. Rogers did not give us a footnote for this smoking gun evidence.

In another statement he says: "Even the Qur'an implies that Muhammad could violate a peace simply because he suspected a tribe might prove treacherous." Here we are told to check the verse 8:58 along with the *tafsiir* of ibn Kathiir. He didn't mention that the end of that verse is that: "Allaah does not love those who are treacherous." Nor did he mention that ibn Kathiir brings multiple quotes showing that treachery is not allowed regardless of which side of the contract it stems. Mr. Rogers also neglectfully left out the fact that, should the Muslims fear that there may be some treachery from the side of the enemy, the right to negate the covenant comes with the condition that the Muslims must first make it absolutely clear that there is no longer any treaty before beginning any mobilization for war. The objective here is to remove the possibility of treachery, or even the accusations of such, by making all intentions of war and peace completely transparent. This is in stark contrast to both parties carrying out mobilization and counter-mobilization under the guise of a treaty. I don't believe any lawyer of international law would have any qualms with such a notion; unless of course he was a student of Mr. Rogers.

Another example of classic Mr. Rogers-type antics is his assertion that the Prophet (S) violated the Treaty of al-Hudaybiah. It's interesting to note in each of these stunning discoveries of Mr. Rogers how he always goes on to mention that all, or most, of the collectors of the *Siirah* got it all wrong by failing to document Mr. Rogers' version of the story. This superiority which Mr. Rogers has gifted himself is quite strange seeing as though Mr. Rogers' version of the *Siirah* is always in some way based upon the records of these men. In this case, Mr. Rogers tells us that the Prophet (S): "secretly supported a proxy who took to raiding the Qurayshi caravans," then he gave support: "for a group of women who migrated to Madinah," and: "finally, he returned to Makkah the following year for pilgrimage fully armed." First of all, Abul Basiir was never supported by the Prophet (S) in any way shape or form. Someone would be hard pressed to prove that the Prophet (S) even supported Abul Basiir morally. Of course, Mr. Rogers doesn't provide us with a shred of evidence in this regard because his word against the world is presumed to be quite enough. Secondly, the Treaty of al-Hudaybiyah was originally signed regarding the return of *men* who migrated to the Prophet (S) not women. On top of this ambiguity in the treaty, once the women had come of their own accord – without an ounce of support from the Prophet (S) – Quraysh did not come to al-Madiinah to collect them as they had done for Abul Basiir. This indicates that they realized that the migration of women was not included in the treaty. Finally, it was part of the treaty (refer to *ar-Rahiiq al-Makhtuum* p. 304 and al-Bukhaari no. 2551 and 2554) for the Prophet (S) to return the next year to perform minor pilgrimage with their swords in their scabbards, bundled up in the baggage of their mounts. This is exactly what the Prophet (S) did without any cheating or betrayal. Moreover, it remains to be asked: Where are the evidences that: "Qurasyh protested these actions?" Doesn't the fact that "they did virtually nothing to enforce the treaty," undermine a case for Mr. Rogers' alleged Qurayshi protest; especially after the treaty was supposedly broken by the Prophet (S) in such a flamboyant manner?

We also learn from Mr. Rogers that "virtually every testimony regarding a *ghazwah* or *sariyyah* that was sent out was preceded by the statement that a report had come to Muhammad that a neighboring tribe was preparing to attack the Muslims. Yet when the army sent to break up this enemy arrived, they would find no enemy army present. But they certainly found plenty of camels, sheep, and cattle, which they promptly seized and brought back to Madinah." Mr. Rogers brings this to attention because, apparently, the biographers of the Prophet (S) were all wrong about the Prophet's (S) habits of keeping treaties. The reality, we are told, is that: "he had little trouble with violating agreements, while making it appear as if his enemies were the first to do so." Unfortunately, since Mr. Rogers didn't give us any footnotes to prove this assertion of his, we will just have to wonder whether or not those tribes who were attacked were ever proven to have covenants with the Prophet (S) or not. Moreover, even if we found documentation of such a covenant, we would have to consult Mr. Rogers on whether or not we should just throw that to the wind anyway, since Mr. Rogers' *Siirah* is fond of flying in the face of everything ever known to be true by consensus.

refer to them as allies, it should also be noted that they notoriously proved themselves to be extremely treacherous.

Later on, there were also a few Arab tribes, such as Khuzaa'ah, who allied themselves with the Muslims; which was due mainly to the fact that they were at odds with Quraysh.

There are also a few exceptional instances of individuals, independent of their tribes, acting in favor of the Prophet (S) and the Muslims. Suraaqah bin Maalik bin Ju'shum, for example, aided the Prophet (S) and Abu Bakr (R) in escaping the search party of Quraysh during the Migration, despite remaining upon his disbelief for much of his life. There is also documentation of Safwaan bin Umayyah joining the Muslims in battle against the Polytheists before actually accepting Islaam. The former was mesmerized by Allaah's miraculous protection of His Messenger (S) while the latter was mainly driven by typical tribal calculations (preferring Quraysh over Hawaazin).

Enemies

The enemies of the Prophet (S) were plenty. Virtually all of the polytheist Arabs, with Quraysh at the helm, were at war with the Prophet (S) and the Muslims. On a larger scale, yet to a lesser degree of intensity, the Romans and the Persians were also hostile; especially towards the end of the Prophet's (S) life[49]. There was also the perpetual problem of the swinging allegiance of the Jews and the clandestine presence of a fifth column, the Hypocrites, from within the Muslims' ranks.

The General Policy:

This disparity between the number of friends and foes required the Prophet (S) to masterfully apply the arts of diplomacy and war in order to evade an all out onslaught and the imminent annihilation of the small Muslim population. It was to be an even greater task to transcend the objective of survival to further aspire for the goal of supremacy. Exercising the rule of divide and conquer, exploiting weaknesses and past enmities,

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The final example is Mr. Rogers' assertion that the Prophet (S) was never fond of paying the bloodwit except: "when it suited his purposes." In fact, he says, the bloodwit was used as a pretext: "to create a controversy with the *Banu* al-Nadir to expel them from Madinah." The main proof for this lack of respect for the bloodwit lies strangely in the stories of war criminals who were assassinated. Why the bloodwit would have to be paid to known and open enemies of Islaam is confounding. With regards to his second point, the fact that the Prophet (S) went to ask Banu an-Nadhiir to uphold their part of the treaty by helping to pay for a bloodwit does not seem to be as controversial as the fact that they took the opportunity to conspire to kill him by throwing a boulder on his head. Of course one could add here that, if it was as Mr. Rogers has informed us, there was never a treaty between the Prophet (S) and Banu an-Nadhiir to begin with. In that case, no one can really be blamed for acting hostile in an openly hostile environment.

What we learn from these examples is that Mr. Rogers is not capable of holding his train of thought long enough to make rational deductions. It seems that his sole purpose, of unrestrictedly defaming the Prophet (S) without scruples, has kept him from realizing that in the course of his slander he has fallen into countless glaring contradictions which undermine his points at every turn.

[49] See the battle of Mu'tah (*ar-Rahiiq al-Makhtuum* p. 358) and Tabuuk (p. 417) and the response of Kisraa to the letter of the Prophet (S) (p. 316).

prioritizing enemies, preserving a high level of security and an edge in intelligence gathering, remaining financially stable, defending credibility, dominating the media, keeping the moral high-ground, maintaining high morale, seizing and holding the initiative, and constantly implementing innovative tactics were all essential elements for any strategy that hoped for success.

The Instruments of Power:

The Military - Despite having fewer numbers, the Prophet (S) consistently out-performed the enemy in planning and executing. His leadership skills and ability to motivate and raise the morale of the Muslims was unprecedented. Additionally, the Prophet (S) was using all of the armor, weapons, and tactics known to the Arabs of his time while introducing other innovations along the way[50].

Some of the tactics in the Prophet's (S) playbook included: Sieges[51], along with the usage of catapults; trenches[52]; standard face to face warfare; duals; assassinations[53]; economic embargos[54]; ambushes and *ghaniimah* (war booty) operations[55]; night/day raids[56]; and

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[50] Mr. Rogers gives us a few positive thoughts here. He tells us that although the army of the Prophet (S) was small they: "quickly became elite," and he mentioned that in the Battle of the Trench: "Using deception and deceit, Muhammad was able to divide the coalition, while engaging in a month-long battle of attrition using tactics the Quraysh had never before seen. Despite numerical and technological superiority, the Quraysh withdrew from Madinah, with Muhammad noting that the Muslims would now raid them mercilessly." Also he said: "Muhammad's campaign against the Quraysh was in large measure an asymmetric one in which he generally refused to engage his enemies on their terms. He used tactics and principles quite foreign to both the enemies of his time and to Westerners today."

[51] See the battles of Banu Qaynuqaa' (*ar-Rahiiq al-Makhtuum* p. 198), Banu an-Nadhiir (p. 269), Banu Quraydhah (p. 279), Khaybar (p. 325), and Taa'if (p. 408).

[52] See the battle of al-Ahzaab (ibid, p. 274), or the 'Battle of the Trench.'

[53] See the assassinations of Ka'b bin Ashraf (ibid, p. 204) and Abu Raafi' (p. 282). Mr. Rogers says: "During Muhammad's consolidation of his authority in Madinah, he ordered a number of high-profile assassinations. While this may seem common enough in the context of history in reality it was quite novel for Arabia." Also, "By using assassination as a tactic, Muhammad moved outside of the experience of his opponents." Not one to let an opportunity slide, Mr. Rogers went on to tell us that these assassinations broke all the rules of the day because the Prophet (S) refused to pay the bloodwit for those who had been assassinated. What he failed to realize was that assassinations were only used against known war criminals who did much worse than denying the "Holocaust," or hailing Hitler. Furthermore, the bloodwit is only applicable when there is a covenant to protect those who were killed. Unfortunately for us, Mr. Rogers is using asymmetric principles on us by forcing us to live up to two separate sets of rules simultaneously. We are blamed for not having covenants with the enemy, while claiming to have them, yet at the same time any act of aggression on our part is seen as a betrayal of these same phantom covenants. Even if we keep our bargain, history can be ignored to show that we actually acted treacherously. Finally, any time the enemy is proven to have breached the contract any act on our part is seen as an over-reactive response or as seeking after a pretext.

[54] The Prophet (S) was largely shutting down the trade routes of Quraysh or at least seriously hampering them. Although not under the leadership of the Prophet (S), Abul Basiir (ibid, p. 310) was also very effective at doing the same after he fled Makkah. In spite of Mr. Rogers' wishes, there is no proof that the Prophet (S) was behind these efforts; although they were no doubt a great help to the interests of the Muslims as whole.

[55] There were many ambush attempts before the Battle of Badr that left Quraysh in constant fear for their merchandise.

scorched earth policy[57]; while deception[58] and pre-emptive attacks[59] were also from amongst the tactics used throughout. It could even be added here that Terrorism, in its most praiseworthy form and connotation, was a tactic employed by the Prophet (S) with great skill. This tactic was also accompanied at times with the use of the seemingly conflicting, yet truly complimentary, elements of Hearts and Minds operations[60]. This is

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[56] See the battles of Khaybar (ibid, p. 325) and Mustalaq (p. 286). The first began at dawn, while the second occurred during normal daylight hours. There is also the *hadiith* of Sa'b bin al-Jaththaamah (al-Bukhaari no. 2850) about night raids.

[57] Palm trees were cut down during the battle of Banu an-Nadhiir. See *Surah* al-Hashr: 5.

[58] Deception was used when approaching Makkah during the year of al-Hudaybiyah by maneuvering right, around Khaalid bin al-Waliid, when he was expecting the Muslims to use a more well trodden road instead (al-Bukhaari no. 2581). During the battle of Mu'tah Khaalid bin al-Waliid gave the impression that reinforcements had come, and then he retreated while keeping his formation; leading the Romans to believe he was drawing them into a trap. In general, the Prophet (S) never went on a campaign without giving the impression that he intended a direction other than his true line of attack (al-Bukhaari no. 2787).

[59] Banu al-Mustalaq had made plans to attack the Prophet (S). Before they could act the Prophet (S) managed to surprise them in a day raid while they were grazing their animals. Apparently, according to Mr. Rogers this was a despicable act because the Prophet (S) *must* have had a covenant with all of those he raided. This, of course, was not the case.

[60] Mr. Rogers explains: "Muhammad created this constant image of the pending threat and used it to full advantage. He did this by selectively using terror to leverage future enemies into submission, a method to which he himself admitted." Here he quotes: "I have been made victorious with terror for a distance of a month" (al-Bukhaari no. 328), as well as the case of the execution of the treacherous bandits from 'Uraynah (al-Bukhaari no. 231), and the cry of despair from the people of Khaybar the morning of the battle (al-Bukhaari no. 364) as examples. Then he says: "But this threat of terror could also be mitigated by compassion and mercy. After the conquest of Khaybar operation, a Jewish woman attempted to poison the Prophet. While one of his companions died Muhammd spit the tainted meat from his mouth and then questioned the woman about her actions. Upon her confession that Muhammad was surely a prophet, and thus strengthening his standing with his people, he had the woman released. Fear and terror would be followed by sighs of relief. Others would experience this same tension that would drive them to give their Islam, as witnessed by the letters sent by Muhammad to neighboring tribal leaders." The Prophet (S) also opened his hands in amnesty to the slaves who wished to surrender to the Muslims during the siege of at-Taa'if. He even refrained from chopping down the palm trees of at-Taa'if when the holed-up Disbelievers called out for mercy. Of course, no one can forget to add that the Prophet (S) completely forgave the people of Quraysh, with the exception of a few war criminals, when he strode victoriously in to Makkah bowing humbly on his mount.

Most of the above quoted material from Mr. Rogers about terrorism and hearts and minds campaigns is truth. The only contention here with Mr. Rogers is simply in regards to his claim that the Prophet (S) had no concern for following any rules or principles when engaging in terror operations. He insists that: "Muhammad and his men quickly gained an incredible and even insatiable love for the spilling of human blood and gore, even that of their own," and that: "Muhammad and his men were almost ruthless to the point of excess." This is in complete contradiction to the statements and actions of the Prophet (S) who was recorded as constantly reminding his generals not to spill innocent blood (Muslim no. 4619, also see al-Bukhaari no. 2851). The Prophet (S) was also known for his kind treatment of war prisoners (see the story of Thumaamah bin Uthaal, al-Bukhaari no. 450). Even when Khubayb was being oppressed at the hands of Quraysh, he did not extend his hand in aggression towards one of their children when he had the chance to harm him (al-Bukhaari no. 2880). Additionally, even after the mutilation of one of his most beloved family members, Hamzah (his paternal uncle), the Prophet (S) did not let his emotions cloud his thought. When given the opportunity for revenge he ordered his companions to refrain from mutilating the enemy (See the *tafsiir* of *Surah* an-Nahl: 126).

It is a common psychological problem for obsessively violent and brutal people to see the rest of the world as having similar pent up aggressions. This is why it should come to no surprise that an American such as

seen most clearly through his (S) strategy of deterrence through swift reprisal[61], while always keeping his hand outstretched and giving a second chance to hapless one-time offenders[62].

It is also worth noting that the Prophet (S) foretold of the military trend we find so common today, but was so unimaginable during an era in which the sword was king…the trend of projectile warfare. He (S) said: "Indeed strength is shooting projectiles."[63] Of course at that time, as we shall see below, this simply equated to having superior archery skills, but the meaning of this broad statement is in no way limited merely to these outdated means of war. This statement was but a prophesy explaining how the future of warfare was to unfold. Now, in an age in which rifles, artillery, and missiles are the common methods of attack, I believe it is quite obvious to all that this *hadiith* holds much more meaning than a simple encouragement towards out shooting the Polytheists of Quraysh in a few battles.

Other similar important trends in warfare have also been highlighted by the Prophet (S) such as the importance of cavalry. The Prophet (S) even foretold of the use of steeds of war, and their continued importance, all the way till the end of time[64]; as is attested to by the use of horses well into the world wars and even during the recent war in Afghanistan. He (S) also foretold, and highly approved, of the early seafaring missions of the companions, pointing to the future important trend of naval power[65].

Some Battles:

The following is by no means an extensive listing of the Prophetic Battles nor is it a complete record of events. These are only some snapshots from three of the most eventful battles in which the Prophet (S) participated. The intent here is only to show how the Prophet (S) was always fully aware of his objectives, his own strengths, and his enemy's strengths, as well as the environment and time constraints within which he had to operate. He also consistently proved to be a resourceful and charismatic leader who knew how to

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Mr. Rogers would think that the Prophet (S) would allow himself to succumb to the same demonic whispers common amongst contemporary American soldiers. How many pictures of torture, massacres, and rape with smiling American faces on them do we have to see before we realize who the real immoral terrorists are?

[61] The execution of the warriors of Banu Quraydhah was one of the most drastic actions taken by the Prophet (S) against an enemy. The reason for such drastic action was that Banu Quraydhah had left their pact with the Muslims during their most trying hour. The presence of this pact is mentioned explicitly in all of the books of the *Siirah* and it is only rejected by Mr. Rogers whenever it seems favorable to do so. In other cases he tells us that: "One *hadith*, or tradition, indicates that at best there was a "non-binding" agreement between the two sides and thus no formal treaty at all." His reference for this is *Tabaqaat ibn Sa'd* which affirms the contract very clearly. The books of *Siirah* even mention that the Prophet (S) took the extra step of sending a delegation to make sure whether or not the covenant had been intentionally nullified by the leadership of Banu Quraydhah.

[62] The hadiith of Thumaamah has been mentioned previously. There are also other examples of releasing prisoners for ransom and without ransom (al-Bukhaari no. 2970 and 2400).

[63] Muslim no. 5055. See also al-Bukhaari no. 2743.

[64] Al-Bukhaari no. 2694. See also no. 410, 2242, 2698, 2708, and 2748.

[65] Al-Bukhaari no. 2636 and 2766.

use the elements of security and surprise to out maneuver his enemies through simple yet thoroughly planned operations. Despite all odds and obstacles he was able, time and again, to remain versatile and change along with the events to seize the initiative from his opponent in order to quickly mount an offensive all the way to the rearmost territory of their strategic depth.

However, the Polytheists, in stark contrast, usually relied upon superior numbers without giving much effort towards extensive planning or preparation. Their leadership was mostly divided, while their motivation usually hinged only upon financial considerations or revenge. Their large coalitions, although powerful in size, were usually weak in morale, cohesion, and resolve. They were mostly predictable in their methods and rarely excelled in introducing innovative tactics[66]. The flanking measure of Khaalid bin al-Waliid (R) during the battle of Uhud, the misinformation scheme before Hawaazin's surprise ambush at Hunayn[67], and the counter-siege measures used during the battle of at-Taa'if, are the only notable exceptions. Despite all of their seemingly large advantages they failed consistently to actually use them in their best interests. It is also not to their credit, as the stronger force, that they were often found acting treacherously and dishonorably; presumably in order to level the playing field[68].

Badr[69]:

This battle was an unintended one for both the Muslims and the Polytheists. The Muslims had originally only intended to attack a virtually unarmed caravan for reasons more

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[66] Mr. Rogers tells us that: "The Quraysh were divided in their opinions and more concerned with earning wealth, especially during the *hajj*, than they were in engaging in the hardships of field campaigning." Also he said: "While the Quraysh were nervous about waging war against people who they still considered to be their brethren, Muhammad had stripped the Muslims of their family ties and identity, uniting the *muhajirin* and *ansar* into one new tribal brotherhood, with more concern for obedience to the Prophet than loyalty to traditional family, clan, or tribe, thus establishing deep psychological cohesion. Finally, the Quraysh were actually squeamish, with a few exceptions, about the horrors of the battlefield." In another passage he says about Quraysh: "While the latter was technologically and numerically superior, they lacked the drive and determination to kill their enemy, and there are also indications that they did not believe in ultimate victory. In fact, it is difficult to determine if they even understood that the early Muslims were their true enemies. More concerned about economic prosperity and the opinions of other tribes in the area, the Qurayshi leaders were unwilling to implement the measures needed to deal the fatal blows to Muhammad's insurgency. Equally important was the infiltration within their own ranks of secret Muslims, who not only confused the counsel of the Qurayshi leadership, but also provided valuable intelligence and financing to Muhammad, and even helped protect the property of émigré Muslims within Makkah. Indecisive and confused, the Quraysh were unable to maintain their coalitions, thus finding themselves increasingly isolated. When Muhammad's army marched on Makkah, the Qurayshi leaders all but collapsed with their principal men rushing to give their Islam."

[67] The Polytheists changed their camp after the Prophet (S) had already received intelligence of their position; confusing the Muslims and deceiving them into crossing a dangerous mountain pass unprepared for an ambush.

[68] The most notable example was the support Quraysh gave to their allies to attack the Prophet's (S) allies during the term of the treaty of al-Hudaybiyah. There are also the dishonorable mutilations of Uhud and the attempted ambush of the Prophet (S) in the *haram* during his stay at al-Hudaybiyah for examples.

[69] Refer to *ar-Rahiiq al-Makhtuum* (p. 156). Additionally, *Khalid bin al-Waleed: the Sword of Allah* is also a good source of detailed information about the main battles between the Prophet (S) and Quraysh. The battle maps presented are taken from the latter source.

financially motivated than military. Similarly, the Polytheists were originally collected in haste simply in order to safely retrieve their wealth from the Muslims' deadly ambush. Due to this fact, neither side can truly claim superiority in their initial planning. The battle does illustrate, however, the Prophet's (S) versatility, his ability to adapt to changes under pressure, his charismatic leadership skills, and the extremely resilient morale and firm faith of the Muslims.

In addition to a lack of planning, the Muslims must also concede that they forfeited the element of surprise through an intelligence blunder. When a small party was sent out to retrieve information about the caravan of Abu Sufyaan from a nearby oasis they carelessly left traces (date pits in their mounts' droppings) which easily translated into the recent presence of the Muslims. Immediately Abu Sufyaan changed routes and called for reinforcements. This put the Muslims at the further disadvantage of having far inferior numbers while at a considerable distance from Madinah.

Here a crucial decision was made, illustrating the Prophet's (S) superb leadership quality of maintaining clear judgment despite the fog and friction of war. The Prophet (S) concluded that the Muslims would have to stand their ground, despite the mounting disadvantages they faced, in order to deny Quraysh the crushing advantage of frenzied morale. If the Muslims turned and fled home this would signal cowardice and weakness. All credibility would be lost. It would only be a matter of time before Madinah fell stunned into the hands of the enemy. This single decision exemplifies the greatest advantage the Muslims possessed: courage and undying faith.

After the decision was made, the Prophet (S) chose to conduct the pre-battle reconnaissance for himself. After denying the locals any useful information about the presence and intentions of the Muslims, the Prophet (S) proceeded to extract vital information, regarding the exact number of the Polytheist forces, from two of their water-boys.

Through this information the Muslims came to realize that they faced nearly 1000 Polytheists (while their own numbers were around 315) with around 100 horses (compared to their 70 camels). This numerical advantage was largely taken care of by matters beyond the human capability of the Muslims.

At the onset of the battle, the Muslims were made to see the enemy as much fewer in number than they actually were, giving them confidence to fight on. Paradoxically, the Polytheists were also made to see the Muslims as few in number. Instead of helping them, this actually led them to becoming *over*-confident.

In fact, this over-confidence was already in effect well before the two armies had met. After securing the caravan, in a manner expressive of the lack of unity of command amongst the Polytheists, Abu Jahl heatedly over-ruled Abu Sufyaan's plea to rationality. Instead of being pleased and content with the salvation of the caravan, Abu Jahl decided to plunge heedlessly forward in a drunken stupor in order to establish Quraysh's dominance for all the Arabs to see. What he failed to take into account, however, was that

the numerical advantage of Quraysh's forces was seriously undermined by their lack of motivation for any serious combat. This lack of motivation was due to the fact that 1) the Polytheists still viewed the Muslims as being from their near of kin and therefore not a worthy mortal opponent and 2) their original incentive for leaving their homes in the direction of Badr was purely of a financial and worldly nature. Virtually none of the Polytheists were particularly ready or fond of dying in this ill-orchestrated battle with the Muslims.

Although, the Muslims had been assured by divine revelation that they were to succeed, they did not simply leave everything to 'chance.' They did not remain idle and careless out of misconstrued concepts of reliance upon Allaah's divine Will. Instead they took all means available to them in order to make the best of the situation.

In this regard, the Prophet (S) exercised excellent leadership qualities by giving the Muslims an opportunity to voice their concerns about the chosen battlefield as well as their advices about how the battle should be carried out. The result was an increase in morale and an improvement of the battle plan. The Prophet (S) took the advice of Habbaab bin al-Mundhir and he placed the Muslim army in a forward position protecting the wells of Badr. This gave the Muslims a tactical logistical advantage and it further caused Quraysh to act irrationally once they realized that they would be left to die of dehydration should they hesitate. The Muslims also laid an emergency escape plan for the Prophet (S). They placed his head quarters in the rear and they prepared fast camels for his quick return to Madiinah should the Muslims be defeated.

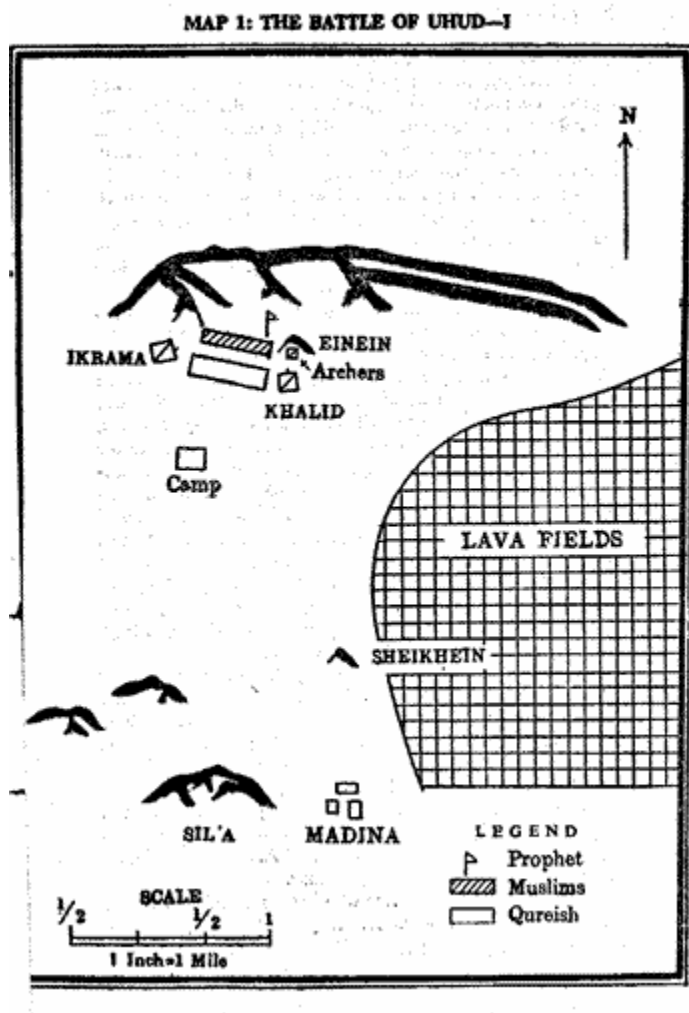
After these limited means had been exhausted, the Prophet (S) prayed for Allaah's victory. The answer to this supplication was seen through a sparse rain that made the fighting positions of the Muslims compact and solid while leaving the positions of the Polytheists soft and loose. The angels also descended to engage in the fight; leaving the corpses of the Polytheists noticeably scorched by their fiery swords. Also, the Prophet (S) threw a handful of sand that entered the eyes of the enemy by the Will of Allaah.

Once the battle commenced, it was also of extreme importance that the Muslims chose to open the encounter with a series of duals that showed the Muslims' qualitative superiority in hand to hand combat. Many of Quraysh's 'finest' were laid to waste by the Muslim warriors. This only further increased the morale of the Muslims and served to severely dash the morale of the over-confident Polytheists.

It is also worth mentioning that the Prophet (S) ordered his companions to maintain the tactical defensive until the Polytheists had reached within the range of combat. This allowed the Muslims to maintain their superior fighting positions (due to the compacted sand), along with their organization and ranks, while the Polytheists were forced to struggle in a less orderly fashion through the loose sand. The Muslims were also allowed the advantage of sniping the approaching Polytheists, using their superb archery skills, before the Polytheists were even within striking range.

After the Polytheists were met with a more determined enemy than they had bargained for, the Muslims, armed with reminders of the great rewards for martyrdom in Paradise, further pressed their newly found advantage of surprise. They seized the tactical initiative and sent Quraysh falling over their heels in retreat; leaving corpses and prisoners of war behind.

The upsetting outcome of this battle created two conflicting themes. The first is an increase in the Muslims' stature which raised their morale and kept their enemies further at bay. The second is an increase in hatred amongst many of the Polytheists giving them the long-lost motivation they had previously lacked to relentlessly attack the Muslims with firm determination.

<u>Uhud</u>

Determined to regain their lost honor, Quraysh decided to set out for al-Madiinah in full force. To further express their intention of conquest they brought along their women and children, motivating them not to flee in the face of the Muslims.

At the sight of this formidable foe, once again the Prophet (S) exercised his honed leadership skills. He provided his companions, especially the *Ansaar* (the original inhabitants of al-Madiinah), the opportunity to voice their concerns and advice. The Prophet (S) had originally intended to fight the Polytheists from within al-Madiinah due to its relative ease of defense, given its mountainous natural barriers. But many of the *Ansaar* had missed their opportunity to share in the battle of Badr, giving them zeal and a sense of overconfidence that led them to insist on going out to fight the enemy, against better judgment.

This decision put the Prophet (S) at a 'self-inflicted' disadvantage that he would have to handle through even better planning efforts. It is easy, at this point, to suggest that the Prophet (S) should have refused to act upon this suggestion of the *Ansaar*, but the reality is that he (S) could have faced greater disadvantages, of dissention and loss of morale amongst his closest companions, had he pressed his more tactical choice.

It is also true that this choice gave 'Abdullaah bin Ubay bin Saluul extra ammunition to use in his propaganda war against the Prophet (S). In fact, through his incitement against the Prophet (S) ibn Ubay actually managed to single-handedly cause one third of the Muslim army to defect back to al-Madiinah at a time of severe adversity for the Muslims.

But, while all of this might very well be the case, it should also be noted that it was already a foregone conclusion that ibn Ubay would inevitably try such a tactic regardless of what the Prophet (S) decided. Proof of this can be seen in the actions of the Hypocrites during the Battle of the Trench which was fought from within al-Madiinah without any outstanding controversy between the Prophet (S) and ibn Ubay. It was also far better that the Prophet (S) maintain the loyalty and morale of his true followers than to cater to those who would never be pleased regardless the decision taken.

At any rate, the Prophet (S) made up for these aforementioned disadvantages by masterfully choosing the best possible positions for each of his companions who numbered around 700 with 50 archers. He chose a flat plain between two mountains to prevent the larger army of Quraysh the opportunity of flanking the fewer Muslims. He also placed the archers on a tactical high ground which left all of the key terrain under Muslim influence.

In this battle, as was the case for Badr, the Muslims were ordered to maintain the tactical defense in order to make the most of their archers' superiority over the enemy. In this regard, the archers were also given stern warnings not to leave this key terrain no matter what. If there should be a defeat, this would be the best place for the Muslims to regroup their strength, and if there should be a victory, holding this terrain would be an important security measure to protect the Muslims while they lose their organization and ranks to gather the war-booty.

Although the Muslims' positions could be a source of curiosity for some, as they left the road to al-Madiinah open in front of Quraysh, this tactic was actually quite commonplace.

Should the Muslims find themselves circumvented, the invaders would inevitably have to face a rear attack in unfriendly territory. Furthermore, the center of gravity in the minds of Quraysh was not al-Madiinah or the Muslims for that matter. They sought only to kill the Prophet (S).

It is worth mentioning here that the Prophet (S) wore full armor for the Battle of Uhud. This goes to further illustrate that it was only after taking all of the means at his disposal that the Prophet (S) went forth to meet his enemy numbered at 3,000 with 200 horses.

The Muslims lost Hamzah[70] (R) early on in the battle, which was a huge psychological loss, but they continued to fight on courageously regardless. Eventually their determination, along with the exquisite preparation of the Prophet (S), led to a stunning victory for the Muslims by the Will of Allaah. The Polytheists were sent into a wild and confused flight with the Muslims hot on their tails.

The outcome of the battle, however, was to be a shocking reversal of events. The archers disobeyed the Prophet's (S) clear orders, causing not only a shift in tactical advantages but also the incurrence of the wrath of Allaah and the removal of His support for the Believers[71].

Khaalid bin al-Waliid, still a general for the Polytheists, seized this opportunity and shifted the momentum of the battle in favor of Quraysh. Immediately, the disorganized Muslims fell prey to an enemy that newly realized both a numerical and territorial advantage.

This mistake could also in no way be attributed to the Prophet (S). It was a clear matter of insubordination and not one of lack of clear instruction. But once again, the Prophet (S) managed to make the best of the situation despite all odds.

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[70] Hamzah bin 'Abdil Muttalib was the paternal uncle of the Prophet (S). Unlike Abu Taalib, Hamzah not only aided the Prophet (S) and fought along his side, he also accepted Islaam and submitted to Allaah as a true Muslim. He was known as the 'master of the martyrs,' and his death especially affected the Prophet (S).

[71] It has been postulated by some (including Edward N. Lutwak) that a key vulnerability of the Muslims in war is that defeat leads them to believe that the wrath of Allaah has come upon them; therefore they can never be victorious in such a state. This is said to cause extreme psychological torment for these defeated Muslims and to further increase their disadvantage. The truth of the matter, however, is that defeat is always traumatic to some degree for the defeated. The real deciding factor determining the level of detriment to the psychology of the defeated is where the blame lies. If the cause of defeat lies with oneself, due to an aspect that is reversible and not inherent, it stands that such a person could possibly recover and surmount this minor set-back. If the cause of defeat lies with the enemy, however, this implies that the enemy is superior in some way; which could possibly lead to an increased over-estimation and fear of the enemy. In Islaam every defeat is reversible so long as the Muslims are ready to correct their mistakes and seek Allaah's forgiveness. Even logistical disadvantages can be overcome, by the will of Allaah, so long as the Muslims try their best. The cause of defeat is never seen in terms of an advantage inherent to the enemy. Now, is this the spirit of a psychologically impaired culture? Or would it be better, psychologically, that the defeat be understood by the Muslims as a product of a fundamental disadvantage within themselves, and a fundamental advantage specific to their enemy (i.e. an inferiority complex)?

The Prophet (S), separated from his main force, was surrounded by a group of devoted companions who would all rather die a tormenting death than to allow harm to befall the Prophet (S). They defended the Prophet (S) from the attack of a group of Polytheists, who were themselves still relatively disorganized, by acting as human shields and shooting large quantities of arrows accurately and aggressively. While the Prophet's (S) companions engaged in active defense, the Prophet (S) was devising a passive defensive maneuver that would be more lasting. He (S) began moving into rockier territory where even a large number of cavalry, and even foot soldiers for that matter, would not have a clear advantage. The Muslims' superior archery would then be able to regain the initiative.

It was in this tumultuous setting that the Polytheists added insult to injury by spreading a rumor that the Prophet (S) had been killed. This deed, for most armies in a similar situation, would have been the straw that broke the camel's back. The Muslims were greatly outnumbered, and now they had also been out maneuvered, while their leader had supposedly been killed. Additionally, it was not hidden from the minds of any of the Muslims that the road to their wealth, women, and children lay wide open before their invaders.

Instead of panicking, many of the Believers found that Allaah had placed calmness and tranquility in their hearts. Many of them were actually spurred on to greater acts of bravery after knowing that their Prophet (S) had already obtained Paradise and there was no other comfort for them in this world. For those of less fortitude, the Prophet (S) managed to make his way to high ground to the pleasure and comfort of those who beheld the sight. Immediately the Muslims began to regroup.

There was a final attempt by a group of Quraysh to obtain higher ground and launch arrows at the Muslims, but they were repelled by 'Umar (R). During these short moments Abu Sufyaan[72] was allowed a brief opportunity to hurl taunts down at the Muslims. He announced that this was a victory to set the score straight after the Battle of Badr. He then challenged the Muslims to reappear next year at Badr for a second round.

If the story had ended in the Muslims scurrying home in fear, the taunts of Abu Sufyaan would have been of substance. But, instead of mounting their horses and remaining on the offensive, the Polytheists decided to ride their camels back home to safety. This act was overshadowed by the fact that the Muslims actually mounted a quick counter attack, known as Humraa al-Asad (named due to the nearest mountain in proximity), in order to salvage their lost credibility. When the Polytheists heard of this contingent their only response was to give their camels an extra prodding to steer clear of any trouble.

The outcome of this battle was 70 Muslim casualties and 20 from the side of the Polytheists. It was, as Abu Sufyaan had proclaimed, comparable to the outcome of Badr, but only if the numerical advantages of the Quraysh were excluded from the calculations.

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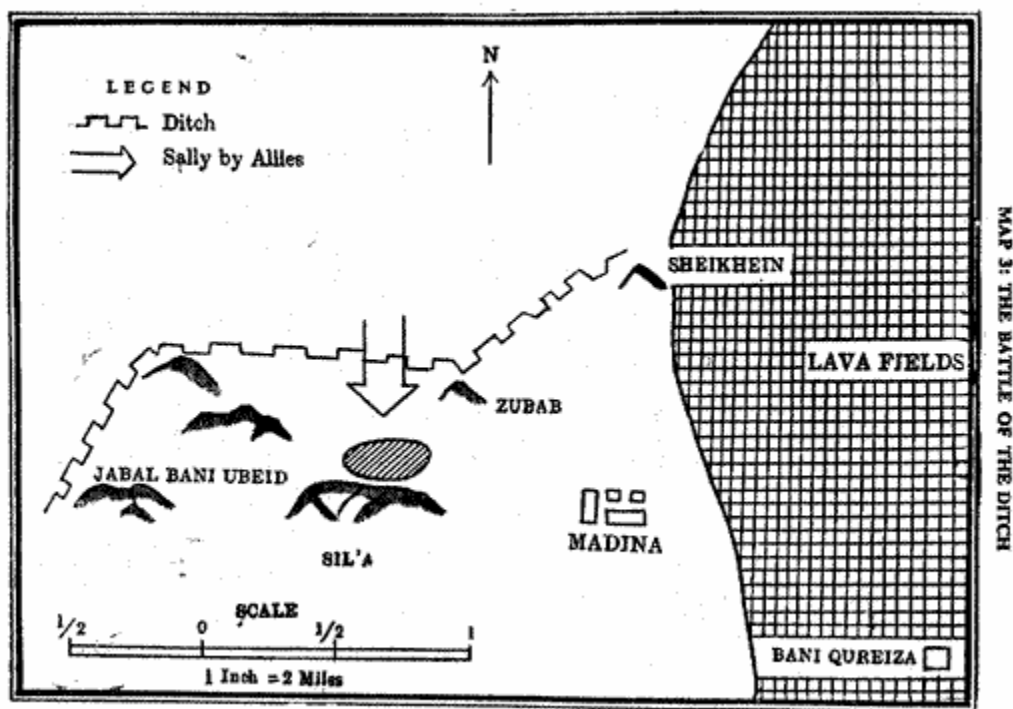
[72] Abu Sufyaan was the de facto leader of Quraysh. He was from the powerful tribe of Bani Umayyah which rivaled Bani Haashim in prestige.

Having avenged their lost loved ones in this battle, the Polytheists were now keen on focusing on their economy instead of continuing hostilities. Consequently, when the next year rolled around, it wasn't the Muslims who failed to arrive at Badr to meet the challenge. It was, in fact, the Quraysh who were responsible for the embarrassing no-show, under the pretext of few grazing grounds; further tarnishing their supposed regained credibility.

In fact, Quraysh was so weary of war that it wasn't until the Jews came to incite them against the Muslims, with promises of huge numbers and full support, that Quraysh was seen once again returning to the battlefield to fight against the Muslims.

Ahzaab

Quraysh and Ghatfaan were brought together in an unlikely alliance by security pledges from the exiled Jews of Bani Nadhiir, who had been taking refuge in Khaybar. The Jews of Bani Quraydhah, however, were still currently under a covenant with the Prophet (S) to protect al-Madiinah from any attack from their direction. Despite this binding agreement, the aforementioned Jews of Bani Nadhiir continued their incitement and their oaths of support for the leaders of Bani Quraydhah until even these insignificant allies agreed to realign themselves with the Confederates against the Prophet (S).

This onslaught was further coupled by the affects of a fifth column from within al-Madiinah. Upon hearing of the arrival of the Confederates (which were estimated to outnumber the Muslims by 10 thousand to 3 three thousand), these traitors began spreading fear and panic amongst the weak hearted.

Even this conglomeration of threats and challenges was incapable of overwhelming the morale of the Prophet (S) and the Muslims. Instead, the Muslims came together once again to sit and decide how best to handle this new assault. As usual the *Ansaar* announced their undying support for the Prophet (S) and they refused any suggestion of buying peace or submitting to taxation. Also typical of the companions, Salmaan al-Faarisi[73] (R) offered an important innovation borrowed from the warfare of his people, the Persians. He suggested that the Muslims dig a trench along the unprotected avenue of approach to al-Madiinah. This would prevent the Polytheists from making any organized charge from the only direction not blocked by mountains and jagged rocks.

Despite the hunger of the companions, induced by the news of the approaching Confederates, they continued to dig this long trench in the scorching heat. The Prophet (S), also noticeably affected by the severe famine, was seen working along side his companions chanting morale-boosting slogans and reminding them of the stunning victories to come. Allaah, the Exalted, even provided the companions with amazing miracles, such as the bottomless plate of food[74], to strengthen their resolve and calm their nerves.

Other precautions and emergency measures were also taken by the Prophet (S) before the battle. He placed the women in a fortified fortress in the rear of al-Madiinah with a few of his companions to stand guard. It is of interest, that this spot would later be the scene of the heroic slaughtering of a Jew on behalf of a Muslim woman, Safiyah bint 'Abdul Mattalab.

When the Polytheists arrived at al-Madiinah, sure of their easy victory, they were perplexed at the sight of the trench. This was indeed a new tactic of war for the Arabs. After surveying the trench for its narrowest sections, the Polytheists mounted a small expeditionary attack. A few cavalry jumped the trench only to be welcomed by 'Ali bin Abii Taalib (R) who made quick work of them.

This only served to leave the Polytheists quite perturbed and in search of a new option. But it was to be Nu'aym bin Mas'uud[75] (R) who would win the day for the Muslims. He approached the Prophet (S) secretly and informed him of his belief in Islaam. The Prophet (S) told him to hide his belief and to strive to spread mistrust amongst the Confederates, which he did masterfully.

He told the Jews of Quraydhah that the Polytheists were not willing to protect them should matters go awry and he urged them to ask the Polytheists for some of their nobles to remain along with them as collateral. Nu'aym also told the Polytheists that the Jews

[73] A Persian who had passed through multiple stages as a Zoroastrian, then a Christian, and finally a Muslim, Salmaan was the epitome of a truth seeker. He traveled from monk to monk to continue learning the true teachings of 'Isaa (AS) and he was even sold into slavery and forced into hard labor as a consequence of his quest to seek out the Prophet (S).
[74] Al-Bukhaari (no. 3385, 3875).
[75] He was from the tribe of Ghatafaan and he had ties to Bani Quraydhah in his *Jaahiliyyah*.

regretted what they did and that they were not to be trusted. He primed them further by warning them that the Jews only wanted to take some of their nobles as "collateral" in order to later betray them by giving them over to the Muslims as a peace offering to mend ties with the Prophet (S). When the Polytheists approached the Jews and they were asked for collateral they instantaneously believed Nu'aym's "intelligence" 100%. Simultaneously, the Jews were also assured of the truthfulness of Nu'aym's "leak" when the Polytheists refused to provide the collateral. The trust between the Confederates, along with their united front, was effectively destroyed.

The final icing on the cake for the Polytheists was the sudden appearance of a strong icy desert wind which left no stone unturned and no eye unpeeled. The last ounce of patience and motivation had finally been sapped out of the Confederates.

The Prophet (S) sent Hudhayfah bin al-Yamaan to get the updated position of the Confederates. After infiltrating the Polytheists ranks, undetected all the way up to Abu Sufyaan himself, he learned that the Polytheists had finally resigned to their fate and were packing up to return home to Makkah.

At the closing of this battle 6 Muslims had been martyred and 3 Polytheists were killed. Despite the small casualty report, the Battle of the Trench had been a decisive victory for the Muslims. It marked the passing of the culmination point for the Polytheists and the transition from the strategic defense to the strategic offense for the Muslims. The strategic initiative had finally been wrestled from the hands of the Polytheists.

Information/Intelligence/Psychology – Many examples can be found which illustrate that the Prophet (S) was consistently using proper security techniques. In times of fear, he established a safe house for his companions in the heart of the enemy[76]. When it came time to migrate he used disguises and made several diversions to keep Quraysh's search parties off of his trail[77]. In times of power, he never set out for a campaign except that he gave indications that he intended a different direction, even to his own companions[78]. When asked about his identity, on many occasions he, or one of his companions, would give misleading (yet truthful) responses[79]. He (S) rarely slept or traveled without being

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[76] Daar al-Arqam (*ar-Rahiiq al-Makhtuum*, p. 73) was established inside Makkah, in the valley of as-Safaa, for the companions to pray and learn the Qur'aan in peace.

[77] The Prophet (S) left his house during the heat of the day, when everyone was sleeping, with his head covered. He only discussed the matter after Abu Bakr (R) had removed everyone from the room, despite having complete trust in their faith. When it finally came time to leave, they left in the direction of Yemen instead of the direction of al-Madiinah. They took shelter in the cave of Thawr in order to allow the search to die down a bit, and they had Abu Bakr's son, 'Abdullaah, as a scout and a supply man throughout their stay. Ibid, p. 127.

[78] Al-Bukhaari (no. 2787).

[79] Once, the Prophet (S) is said to have explained his place of departure by saying: "We are from the water." The true meaning is that all living things were created from water as Allaah, the Exalted, described in the Qur'aan. But the Bedouin was left to believe that the Prophet (S) had departed from a particular well in the area. On another occasion, Abu Bakr (R) is said to have described the Prophet (S) as: "The one who guides the way." Abu Bakr (R) intended that the Prophet (S) guides him in the affairs of his worldly life

accompanied by guards[80] (although there were a few isolated occasions in which his (S) life or property was placed at danger by unexpected events[81]). The Muslims were even taught how to pray while in a state of over-watch during times of apprehension[82].

Security was actually engrained into the very culture of Islaam. The entire Muslim congregation was urged at all times not to speak about that which does not concern them[83]. Any news related to state affairs was to be taken directly to those concerned without spreading it to those who would not fully understand its repercussions[84].

This is not to say, however, that information never slipped out at times by way of the Hypocrites or roaming Bedouins. Rather, the point at hand is only that the proper steps and precautions were always being taken, regardless of the outcome.

Not only was the Prophet (S) engaged in taking security measures, but through using intelligence gathering techniques, he also managed to get the enemy's most vital information more often than not. Regular reconnaissance was a mainstay of the Prophet's (S) operations. Often the Prophet (S) would go out himself to gather information, sometimes alone[85]. Other times he would send one of his companions or a group of them[86]. On occasions, through unknown terrain, a guide would be hired on to lead the way. In extreme cases, like the story of Hudhayfah (R), companions could even be sent into the depths of the enemy forces.

There are also examples of the Prophet (S) using misinformation to split up the enemy, as preceded in the story of Nu'aym bin Mas'uud (R). Also in the case of Humraa' al-Asad the Prophet (S) sent Ma'bad al-Khuzaa'i, an allied Polytheist, to exaggerate the size of the Prophet's (S) forces coming after Quraysh for a counterattack. The Prophet (S) emphasized these types of psy-ops by noting that: "[The outcome of] war is [decided by] a trick."[87]

Poetry was also used offensively and defensively, generally by an official spokesman such as Hassaan bin Thaabit, as an effective form of mass media[88].

Da'wah (propagation of the Islaamic message), however, was the main form of psychological effort. Despite its benign nature it proved to be extremely productive in recruiting and dissuading would-be-enemies from engaging in the fight against Islaam. It was always difficult upon Quraysh to incite others against the Prophet (S), or to

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and in the affairs of his Hereafter, but the unsuspecting would believe that the Prophet (S) was merely a travel guide.

[80] Al-Bukhaari (no. 2581, 2729, 3492, 4895).
[81] Al-Bukhaari (no. 3906). Also see the story of the poisoned meat presented by the Jew lady.
[82] An-Nisaa': 102.
[83] Al-Bukhaari (no. 1312, 1407, 5709, 5712) and Muslim (no. 7).
[84] An-Nisaa': 83.
[85] Al-Bukhaari (no. 2665).
[86] Al-Bukhaari (no. 2691).
[87] Al-Bukhaari (no. 2864).
[88] Al-Bukhaari (no. 3041, 3338, 3808).

assassinate his character, because of his outstanding conduct, his noble behavior, and his clear message of values and morals.

Public displays of mercy, such as releasing prisoners of war, releasing the wives and children of those who accepted Islaam[89], and refraining from taking vengeance upon Quraysh after conquering Makkah, were all methods used to maintain the moral high-ground and win the psychological war of hearts and minds.

Under the Prophet's (S) wise direction, the strategy of shock and awe was repeatedly executed at its finest. Many of those recently conquered would be awarded large sums of money or cattle in order to soften their hearts[90].

In contrast, the Polytheists were usually very lax in their security as is attested to by the successful intelligence operations of the Prophet (S). In the way of intelligence gathering, Abu Sufyaan's lucky find before the battle of Badr was generally their only accomplishment despite their large network of allies, including the Hypocrites from within the ranks of the Muslims.

Their propaganda effort was largely built upon lies circulated through poetry and rumors. Despite its initial powerful effects, this tactic actually became self-defeating in the end. When people finally came into contact with the Prophet (S) they were immediately amazed and astonished to find that he was not a madman, a liar, or a magician. Once the credibility of the Polytheists was destroyed it was only a matter of time before the message inevitably touched the hearts.

Once a curious truth-seeker managed to penetrate the wall of lies and receive the message, the only remaining weapon for the Polytheists was to threaten these would-be-Muslims with facing eternal dishonor upon the tongues of the Arabs for leaving the path of their forefathers.

When all else failed other psychological efforts of dissuasion were taken. Severing family ties, actual economic boycotts, and threats of torture were from the most prevalent.

Politics/Diplomacy (Internal and External) – The Prophet (S) was as skilled at diplomacy as he was at war. From the very beginning of his (S) message he was adept at always finding a niche for himself and his companions. He constantly looked for those who could shelter them with their political clout.

Once the Prophet (S) found the *Ansaar* – who were comprised of the two tribes of Aws and Khazraj – he (S) immediately engaged himself in efforts to mend their hearts together. This was daunting work considering the fact that the Prophet's (S) arrival finally marked the cession of the long haunting war between the two tribes, which served to virtually exhaust them of their nobles and to completely ravage and destroy all existing family ties.

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[89] Al-Bukhaari (no. 2184).
[90] Al-Bukhaari (no. 2977, 2981).

This apparent misfortune was actually a blessing in disguise because it allowed the Prophet (S) to fill the political vacuum that both tribes had been desperately vying to plug.

The Prophet (S) also set out to bind the hearts of the *Ansaar* and *Muhaajiriin* through ties of brotherhood. Each *Ansaari* was paired with a *Muhaajir* and they were to take each other as brothers in faith as well as brothers in an even more practical sense. In the beginning of Islaam such brothers were actually ordered to inherit from one another[91].

Through the Prophet's (S) early political efforts, he (S) even managed to keep the Hypocrites at bay by containing the antics of 'Abdullaah bin Ubay bin Saluul through gestures which allowed him to feel influential without actually having any real clout.

However, in contrast to how he (S) sought to undermine and contain known hypocrites like ibn Ubay, it was actually the Prophet's (S) practice to further promote the prestige of the other longstanding leaders of the Ansaar, such as Sa'd bin Mu'aadh and Sa'd bin 'Ubaadah, due to their more outwardly sincere belief. In fact, this was also the case for most other tribal leaders that entered Islaam. The utility behind such a decision is clear. Leaders were provided with further incentive to bring their people to Islaam because they did not have to face the possibility of being completely stripped of their pomp and prestige.

With regards to his neighbors surrounding al-Madiinah, the Prophet (S) was also proficient in keeping the Jews engaged in treaties (that is before they inevitably chose to break them in treachery) long enough to prevent them from uniting amongst themselves against the Muslims. In most cases, these treaties even deterred the Jews from uniting with those outside of themselves as well. This is easily demonstrated by the fact that the Prophet (S) was usually able to arrange his battles with the Jews neatly between his other larger battles with the Polytheists. It was only during the Battle of the Trench that he had to worry about fighting them collectively.

This problem of having to deal with weak alliances with possible foes while also dealing with pressures from within was not something unique to the Prophet's (S) situation. Quraysh was also conscious of the tribes nearest to them that continued to prove hostile from time to time[92]. The Prophet (S), on his part, later sought to enhance that problem by taking on Khuzaa'ah as an ally.

On the internal front, the Prophet (S) also had clandestine Muslims living amongst Quraysh. Even his (S) family members from Bani Haashim, though not yet Muslims, were helpful at times in dissuading Quraysh from attacking the Prophet (S)[93].

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[91] Al-Anfaal: 75.

[92] Before the Battle of Badr the Quraysh were actually afraid that Bani Bakr, from Khuzaa'ah, would attack them while most of their men were away.

[93] Many of Bani Haashim left the army of Quraysh for Makkah before the Battle of Badr. Also, al-'Abbaas (R) successfully persuaded Abu Sufyaan (R) from putting up a fight during the conquest of Makkah.

On the topic of covenants, contrary to modern propaganda, the Prophet (S) was always cautious never to break covenants or to act dishonestly. In fact, during the treaty of Hudaybiyah the Prophet (S) even refrained from helping his own companions, despite seeing them begging for help, live before his eyes, during their extreme suffering. He was essentially bound by his word not to interfere with his fellow Believers, though shackled and tortured as they were, because such would be considered breaking the treaty[94].

But this is definitely not to say that the Prophet (S) never ceased being alert and prepared to deal with those who weren't ready to return the favor. For situations in which enemies acted treacherously, while still presumably under a covenant with the Prophet (S), there was a heavy price to pay. It is through these instances that the spin-doctors dishonestly seek to maneuver and spin their tales[95].

No doubt, the Muslims were not perfect. That is to say, there were of course individual cases in which the Prophet's (S) companions accidentally engaged in something which was considered treachery or dishonest behavior[96]. However, even during these few isolated cases, the Prophet (S) was quick to pay the blood money and amend what his companions had unintentionally broken.

With respect to foreign relations, delegations were constantly being sent by the Prophet (S) to the leaders of other tribes and even nations. When it came down to choosing the proper representatives for these excursions, it became evident that this was something he (S) had an unmistakable knack for. It was even more the better that the Muslims were so diverse that, from amongst the many different tribes and cultures found within his (S) companions, the Prophet (S) was always sure to find the right man for the job.

However, emphasizing the Prophet's (S) skill in choosing the best for the job is not intended to downplay the fact that Allaah, the Exalted, had blessed the Prophet (S) with many talented men. Each one of them was equal to an entire nation. This is evident through the famous contest that transpired in the court of an-Najjaashi between Ja'far bin Abii Taalib and the delegation of the Polytheists[97]. Also, in many instances only one man was sent back to his tribe alone to later return back to the Prophet (S) with all of them as Muslims[98].

The Prophet's (S) eloquence and mastery of language was also an important element of diplomacy. His concise and powerful letters to the superpowers of the era proved to be extremely effective. If the responses to the letters were gracious, the Prophet (S) used to accept the gifts he received from the various kings and leaders who sought to build relations with the Muslims.

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[94] See the story of Abu Jandal bin Suhayl bin 'Amr, al-Bukhaari (no. 2581).
[95] Such is the case for the punishment of Bani Quraydhah and the people of 'Uraynah.
[96] Such as the case of Usaamah bin Zayd (R) and Khaalid bin al-Waliid (R) when they killed new Muslims due to their wrong understanding about which Islaam was or was not acceptable (al-Bukhaari no. 4021,4084). This is also the case for the Muslims who killed some Polytheists from Bani 'Aamir without knowing that the Prophet (S) had already given them a covenant.
[97] See *ar-Rahiiq al-Makhtuum* p. 77.
[98] Mus'ab bin 'Umayr was responsible for the Islaam of many of the *Ansaar* before the Migration.

Similarly, the Prophet (S) was also gracious in his acceptance of delegations from other tribes and nations. He always honored his guests and never harmed a messenger regardless of his religion or political views[99]. It was often the case that messengers and representatives would be so amazed by the Prophet's (S) generosity, truthfulness, humility, and respect amongst his companions that they would accept Islaam immediately[100].

Political marriages were also a tactic used adeptly by the Prophet (S). This is evident through his (S) marriage with Safiyah (R), who was from a prominent family of the Jews of Khaybar, and Jawayriyah (R), who was from a prominent family of Bani Mustalaq.

When these diplomatic approaches no longer showed signs of promise, it was inevitable then for the Prophet (S) to become more aggressive and engage in war. Even then, as he (S) was laced up and in arms, the stage of the battleground did not prevent the Prophet (S) from offering a last diplomatic effort to avoid unnecessary combat. He (S) would send his companions to call the enemy to Islaam (at times during the actual battle[101]) in hopes that their better judgment would prevail. If they refused to accept Islaam they were then offered a benevolent second option of paying the *jizyah*. This option, despite its appearance and its connotation in modern propaganda, was actually quite appealing to many non-Muslims throughout the ages in comparison to the usual tax-burden commonly forced upon the poor and oppressed. In fact, as Islaam spread, the Disbelievers themselves have noted in their records that the Muslims were often seen as the liberators of Jews and Christians throughout the world.

Another final element of the Prophet's (S) art of diplomacy, which demands to be highlighted here, is that the Prophet (S) never allowed politics to interfere with his (S) principles. Although it was from the incredible mercy of the Prophet (S) that he often wished that he could appease some of the disbelievers, in order to bring them to Islaam and save them from eternal pain, never did he (S) allow this wish of his to cloud his moral compass. Despite all methods used to bend him, the commands of Allaah, the Exalted, were always top priority. Indeed, how could it have been otherwise? After all, wasn't it the case that the entire goal of his (S) diplomacy was only to ensure that the Word of Allaah was uppermost? No matter what the temporal rewards may be, the hereafter was in fact his (S) true objective. No matter how seemingly good the outcome of a decision may be, the ends could never justify the means.

This evident mastery of diplomacy on behalf of the Prophet (S) is hardly comparable to the frail efforts of the Polytheists. Not only did they fail to overcome Ja'far bin Abii Taalib's (R) arguments in the presence of an-Najjaashi, their best efforts were not even of much substance with Hiraql despite the absence of a Muslim delegation to accompany

[99] See Abu Daawuud (no. 2761).
[100] See how 'Urwah bin Mas'uud was impressed by the Prophet (S) and his companions' treatment of him (al-Bukhaari no. 2581).
[101] Al-Bukhaari (no. 2783).

the Prophet's (S) letter[102]. Even the gathering of the Confederates, one of the grandest diplomatic achievements of the Prophet's (S) enemies, was largely a Jewish effort and had little to do with the Polytheists' own mastery of persuasion[103].

The Economy – Early on in the prophethood, due to the effective absence of any form of state, sources of finance were restricted solely to voluntary charity, offered infrequently by the few, devout, and mostly poor, followers of the Prophet (S). Despite this scarcity of resources, the sheer lack of any real state functions in need of funding, at such an early stage into the progression of the *Siirah*, meant that the matter of finances was of very little significance anyway. In fact, it wasn't until the occurrence of the Migration that this state of affairs would be subject to change.

Ironically though, when it finally did change, change it did. Put differently, the extremely long delay in the arrival of this change was immediately overshadowed by the extremity of both its size and scope. Virtually over night the Muslim Ummah, and al-Madiinah along with it, had become a fully functioning government complete with its own self-sufficient economy.

As mentioned previously, the Muslim society is largely based upon the concept of self-sufficiency. Each person is encouraged to make his own living without relying upon the handouts of others[104]. In this way, almost all forms of occupations are open before

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[102] Al-Bukhaari (no. 7).

[103] It is quite obvious that Islaam was the decisive factor in all of these Muslim diplomatic and military victories and not simply the attributes of the men involved; because many of yesterday's Polytheist enemies became today's Muslim heroes. It was Islaam that provided them the motivation, morals, values, and vision they needed to succeed.

[104] Not to forget about our good friend Mr. Rogers, it's interesting to see how he tries to cover up this Islaamic reality by taking pot-shots at the *Muhaajiriin* of *Ahl as-Suffah*: "With only a few exceptions, the *muhajirin* did not engage in much productive work, although they were apparently supposed to in order to assist the *ansar* in harvesting the latter's date crop. Instead, many of the *muhajirin* resided in the *suffah*, a section of Muhammad's newly built mosque where unemployed families awaited largess as well as recruitment for various *razzias*, or raids." He continues this line of argument when mentioning the *Zakaah* by saying: "As the *muhajirin* had no property and little wealth, the burden of *zakat* fell on the *ansar*." He adds in a footnote: "While Muslim writers defend it as a charity tax, it must be recalled that at this time the poor were in the *suffah*."

The Prophet (S) said: "The upper hand is better than the lower hand," (al-Bukhaari no. 1361) and: "That one of you take his rope and come back with a bundle of wood on his back and sell it, by which Allaah protects his face, is better for him than asking the people; whether they give to him or not." (al-Bukhaari no. 1402). The *Muhaajiriin* used to implement these teachings as is evident in many hadiiths. Abu Hurayrah (R) said: "Our brothers from the *Muhaajiriin* used to be preoccupied with doing business in the markets while our brothers from the *Ansaar* were preoccupied with maintaining their wealth, but Abu Hurayrah used to stay with Allaah's Messenger (S) with enough to fill his stomach; therefore, he used to witness what they did not witness and memorize what they did not memorize." (al-Bukhaari no. 118). This indicates that the majority of the *Muhaajiriin* and even the *Ansaar* were preoccupied with seeking wealth, while only Abu Hurayrah (R) was not involved with such for the sake of preserving Islaamic knowledge. Even 'Umar (R) used to become preoccupied from sitting with the Prophet (S). He and his Ansaari brother used to take turns sitting with the Prophet (S) on alternating days (al-Bukhaari no. 89). Let's not forget that it was 'Uthmaan, a *Muhaajir*, who supplied the army of Tabuuk and bought the well of Ruumah for the Muslims of al-

Muslims except, of course, for those commonly termed as 'vice,' in Western societies (such as gambling, drugs, prostitution, and usury[105]). However, in cases of misfortune, family members, collectively making up tightly knit family units, are obliged to help one another out of debt back to independence. If all else fails, portions of the annual obligatory charity – taken as a percentage of the surplus of the wealthy – is spread out amongst the poor and those mired in debt.

Other portions of the annual obligatory charity are set aside for other similar functions such as freeing slaves, helping wayfarers, and providing for those actively engaged in gathering and disbursing the charity. This is quite obviously conducive towards building a self-sufficient society, not to mention a self-sufficient collection system, which leaves no room for unanswered burdens upon the economy.

The other two remaining portions of the annual obligatory charity are of diplomatic and military importance. The first of these is the portion marked for softening the hearts of Islaam's opponents whose support, it is hoped, will be gained through financial incentives. The second is the portion set aside for engaging in the state's most lucrative activity: military conquest.

Any Muslim incapable of providing his own weapons, rations, and transportation - the equipment necessary for engaging in Jihaad - is eligible to receive help from this portion of the charity. This generous helping hand not only adds to the total force of the Muslims - which is an obvious primary motivation for such funding - it is also a means of promoting the future self-sufficiency of those who have now been empowered with the opportunity of receiving war-booty, should the Muslims prove victorious in their campaigning. The same is true for war-booty acquired without actual combat – or *Fay'* – in that it also aims to both increase the Muslim fighting force and to ensure that the poor are not left out of the proceeds of Islaam's expansion.

Madiinah (al-Bukhaari no. 2626). 'Abdur Rahmaan bin 'Awf also refused the hospitality of his *Ansaari* brother, who offered him one of his wives and half of his wealth, to go do business for himself in the market place. Within a short time he had amassed a good amount of wealth and got married with his own money (al-Bukhaari no. 1943).

In short, Mr. Rogers is simply on a misinformation mission to no where.

[105] For some reason prohibiting usury struck a chord with Mr. Rogers. He says: "The fall of Makkah in 630 did not bring an end to the Quraysh. Instead, Muhammad stripped the middle class of its privileges and a principal means of increasing wealth, the use of interest, or *riba*." Apparently *Zakaah* was also aimed at "stymieing" "the threat of middle-class competition for leadership." The upper-class is also presumably all of Quraysh, the Prophet (S), and his companions, to the exception of the rest of the world. It seems Mr. Rogers is a bit confused. He seems to be both pro-middle-class (the prey) and pro-banker (the predator). He adds to this contradiction by claiming that Zakaah (a tax paid by the rich to the poor) is somehow pro-upper-class and in the favor of the Prophet (S) (who made *Zakaah* off limits to himself and his family). He seals the deal by claiming that the Prophet (S) had consolidated power favorably before his death, yet the son of one of his key opponents soon became *Khaliifah*! This man knows no limits. Of course the leadership was given to Quraysh because the Arabs would not be able to unite upon the leadership of anyone else. See the "Twenty-Seven Articles" by T.E. Lawrence (particularly article 8). But, if this was simply done out of bias on behalf of the Prophet (S), why didn't he ensure the leadership of Bani Haashim? Why was 'Ali only the fourth of the *Khulafaa'* and why did Hasan step down to "the son of one of the Prophet's key opponents?"

Whatever remains of the *Fay'*, after equipping the less fortunate for war, is left at the disposal of the state. It can be used to help fulfill the same needs addressed by the annual obligatory charity or, instead, it could be used for larger purposes such as the construction of roads, bridges, or walls. Hospitals, schools, masjids, and other public facilities and functions – such as the judicial system – are also projects eligible for funding by *Fay'*. A small portion of the war-booty (*Ghaniimah*) - a proportion of one fifth to be exact - is also set aside for similar purposes.

In light of these economic trends, it's of extreme relevance here to note that the Islaamic state is not of a largely bureaucratic nature. This is especially true of the early government of the Prophet (S). Most of the public money gathered by the state is immediately redistributed amongst the population. It is only the *Fay'* and one fifth of the *Ghaniimah* that have a more versatile function in promoting state functions. Even these two sources, as mentioned above, are largely spent on outfitting soldiers. This, in reality, makes them more a part of the larger aim of promoting self-sufficiency than the effort to directly support the relatively few functions of the state.

This noted focus on minimizing the size of the government, and thereby the size of government spending, holds one of the secrets of Islaam's strength. Islaam's immediate reinvestment of public money into the population is a policy which promotes a fiscally sound society centered, even in times of peace, upon becoming self-sufficient and ready for war. More specifically, in return for such financial help to society, an informal portion of all economic surpluses is expected to be directed towards individual military obligations, which, in turn, usually leads to the acquisition of large financial incentives and returns. Consequently, in Islaam there is very little conflict, if any at all, between guns and butter. In fact, Islaam's economic policy is intimately tied to the complementary fundamentals of the Islaamic Jihaadi creed which promotes the creation of a warrior society constantly prepared for war. Together, these two factors produce a 'nation in arms' which is both psychologically and financially prepared for war at all times.

Keeping this economic system in mind, it comes as no surprise that some of the first military endeavors of the Prophet (S) were financial in nature. Badr, as was already explained, was initially an attempt to capture an unarmed caravan. There was also a constant trickle of other smaller raids intended - after the obvious religious and diplomatic aims - to produce financial returns.

As Islaam grew in population and territory other less combat-dependant sources of income were also established; such as the agricultural proceeds of the farms of Khaybar for example. Eventually, with the formal establishment of the *Jizyah*, a steady influx of revenue was secured from multiple corners of the Peninsula; provided by non-Muslims who chose, instead of conversion or combat, to submit to Islaam's authority through payment of the annual tax.

Paradoxically, Quraysh's relative lack of enemies, along with their focus on the single objective of conventionally destroying the Muslim army, actually led to a fiscally

unsound policy. While the Muslims could 'refuel' after each major conflict with Quraysh by sending out small contingents for raiding, or by defeating other second-rate enemies, the Polytheists of Quraysh - who never really gained any substantial war-booty from their engagements with the Muslims - were generally left to lick their wounds after each conflict without any similar sources of morale inducements. Even when the major battles were over - in fact even during the ten year treaty between the Prophet (S) and Quraysh – the Polytheists of Quraysh, unlike their counterparts from the agriculturally focused *Ansaar*, still had to suffer losses to their main source of income: trade. Almost year round the trade routes between Quraysh and *Shaam* were constantly under threat by the Muslims. If the threat wasn't coming from the Muslims under the leadership of the Prophet (S), due to logistics or being bound by the aforementioned treaty of Hudaybiyah, it was likely to come from the Muslims under the leadership of Abu Basiir (R) who were forced, ironically by Quraysh themselves, not to join the main body of Muslims who were bound by the treaty not to engage in acts of aggression.

In addition to lacking the revenue of war-booty, the Polytheists of Quraysh were also at the disadvantage of not having an advanced charity system similar to that of the Muslims which allowed for a self-sufficient society of soldiers. However, to Quraysh's credit, it should still be noted that there did exist in their culture a very informal arrangement, common amongst the pre-Islaamic Arabs, geared towards helping the poor; especially those nearest of kin. It is also true that, similar to the army of the Muslims, the men of Quraysh were also bound by tradition to serve their tribe militarily with their own wealth and souls when decided by the tribal chiefs and elders. But, even with these points noted, there is still a vast difference between Quraysh's informal tribal customs and the intricate and sophisticated Islaamic economic system, consisting of multiple overlapping programs aimed at supporting self-sufficiency amongst the entire society in order to empower them to rise to the call of fueling the military machine responsible for turning the wheels of the economy.

Other Factors Related to the Balance of Power:

Leadership – As is clear from the wealth of examples provided above, the superb leadership of the Prophet (S) is unquestionable. His (S) charisma, stemming largely from his integrity and honest actions, had a power of its own. Even in the worst of times his (S) faith and reliance in Allaah was unwavering[106]. His (S) vision[107] and objectives were always clear and he never had any difficulty getting his narrative across to even his enemies, not to mention his followers. Quick and thought-out decisions under the duress of war and fatigue were undertaken time and again by the Prophet (S) with flawless skill. But, despite even the worst conditions of urgency, he (S) was always careful to carry out his leadership duties in an environment of consultation and virtual consensus. At times he (S) would even leave his own personal opinion for that of the majority due to the Islaamic concept of *Shuraa*, which he (S) dutifully upheld in matters of opinion, but when it came down to matters of values or principles he (S) never wavered in standing for the truth. His (S) mastery of consultation was also coupled with a strong grasp of the art of persuasion;

[106] Al-Bukhaari (no. 3400, 3416).
[107] Muslim (no. 7440).

meaning that he (S) rarely had to resort to the option of giving orders to his companions[108]. In fact, with companions who loved and respected the Prophet (S) more than any other earthly soul, he (S) was always sure to find enough volunteers. He (S) never over-burdened anyone, but rather would often engage in work alongside his (S) companions[109]. He (S) was quick to take burdensome tasks upon himself without bothering others, but he was also keen to delegate work for his (S) companions to give them the opportunity to hone their leadership skills and to refrain from allowing himself to become bogged down in menial matters[110]. When he (S) delegated work, he did not micromanage, or stifle, initiative[111], nor was his instruction ever unclear, or ambiguous. Complements came easy to his (S) tongue and he always repaid those who did well to him[112]. However, in contrast, he (S) was extremely slow to ever speak out against even the most infamous of his (S) detractors[113]. This array of virtuous characteristics shined brightly around the Prophet (S) and illuminated all around him (S). In fact, by the death of the Prophet (S) it was difficult to point out any of his (S) closer companions who had not been transformed into world-class leaders. It's also worth noting, that during the Prophet's (S) life, the Islaamic State was extremely small in nature; not requiring the adherence to any one particular type of administrative paradigm. This allowed for versatility and flexibility throughout the volatile changes the Islaamic State underwent, but regardless of the near adhocracy of the system, order and clarity were also highly encouraged at all times[114].

In stark contrast, the leadership of Quraysh was never of a unified or clear nature[115]. Their vision and objectives[116] were always clouded in a shroud of personal confusions and cultural ambiguities. The decision making process was almost always messy. Consultation, although a mainstay of their society by nature of the decentralized authority, rarely ever bore any beneficial fruits. Opinions often ranged the spectrum and conflicting personalities were constantly colliding and jousting for supremacy[117]. Tribal interests were often evaluated and assessed in light of the interests of the elite. A lack of realism left the mood in a perpetual see-saw ranging from extreme optimism to hopeless negativity. Decisions were often made in rage or fervor only to be reversed under a

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[108] Al-Bukhaari (no. 2691). Also see the story of Hudhayfah during the Battle of the Trench (Musnad al-Imaam Ahmad no. 23382 (al-Arna'uut)). Despite the undisputed historical accuracy of the *hadiith*, the chain contains some weakness because of Muhammad bin al-Ishaaq and an unknown *taabi'i*.
[109] Al-Bukhaari (no. 3875).
[110] Al-Bukhaari (no. 1331, 2190, 4134).
[111] Muslim (no. 4619).
[112] Al-Bukhaari (no. 2445).
[113] Al-Bukhaari (no. 1300).
[114] Al-Bukhaari (no. 6718). Muslim (no. 6330).
[115] See how many tribes turned back before the Battle of Badr (*ar-Rahiiq al-Makhtuum* p. 164) and how multiple spokesmen were sent on the day of al-Hudaybiyah (p. 300).
[116] Some were only out to save their money; others wanted to save face; while others were out to kill Muhammad (S). See how they differed over what to do with the Prophet (S) in the *tafsiir* of al-Anfaal: 30.
[117] For a typical Polytheist contest of prestige, see the debate that took place between the Hawaazin leaders before the Battle of Hunayn (ibid, p. 399).

blanket of caution and fear[118]. In short, Quraysh was almost always in a state of topsy-turvy instability due to its lack of firm leadership.

Morale/Will – All previous topics of this study have already touched upon the topic of the Muslims' high level of morale in one way or another. After all, it is, in fact, one of the main elements of Islaam's success in the fields of persevering, spreading, and incorporating. It could even be postulated that morale was the single most effective factor leading to the Muslims' edge over Quraysh, and even Rome and Persia in later battles.

Of course faith in Allaah and the incentive of peace and joy in the eternal, if not the temporal, life was always at the root of keeping the morale of the Muslims stable even in the worst times. However, while keeping that in mind, there are, of course, other extremely important factors as well; such as the Prophet's (S) aforementioned mastery of leadership. His (S) charisma, his eloquent words of encouragement, and his constant consultation are but a few examples. The financial incentives provided by the unique economic system of Islaam also played a role; especially in times of victory, as is to be expected. There was also the amazing effect of divine miracles and heavenly revelation that always came when the Muslims needed it the most.

All of these factors must be taken together and observed in respect with one another. After all, humans will be humans at the end of the day. The morale of an entire society is rarely indestructible in the face of outstanding mismanagement of the remaining elements of power.

The morale of Quraysh, on the other hand, was normally a mix between being over-confident and absolutely scared to death[119]. When going forward was not a good option they over-confidently pressed ahead. Conversely, when action was necessary for survival they would become scared. However, in all fairness, for people who were only motivated by the temporal rewards of this life, many of them were too ready to put their lives in danger for their disbelief and sense of honor. Many were only consoled with the thought that their heroic deeds would render them immortal in the history of their tribe.

Support of Population – The population must no doubt be divided amongst those who were Muslims and those who were Non-Muslims. Obviously the Muslims were always in complete support of the Prophet (S); with the notable exception of the many hypocrites hiding within the ranks. Nevertheless, as mentioned previously, the Prophet (S) always managed to contain these hypocrites and keep them from inflicting any critical blows through his (S) methods of pacification. It is also of comfort to note that this problem was

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[118] After the Battle of Uhud, Abu Sufyaan (R) made a challenge for the Muslims to appear the next year at Badr, but it was Quraysh who actually reneged.

[119] Mr. Rogers points out that a case could be made that Quraysh never really believed in victory. His reliance on the term '*sijaal*', used by Abu Sufyaan (R) to describe the war, (i.e. that the battles between the Prophet (S) and Quraysh were sometimes in the favor of one and sometimes in the favor of the other) as a proof for such an assertion is a bit questionable, but other evidences can be found. Abu Sufyaan (R) noted that after his encounter with Hiraql he was certain that the Prophet (S) would be victorious (al-Bukhaari no. 7). If such was the inner convictions of the leadership of Quraysh, the rest of the Arabs were even less apt to be sure of victory (al-Bukhaari no. 4051).

not something unique or exclusive to the Muslims, as has already proceeded. There were also Muslims - and non-Muslims alike - who remained in support of the Prophet (S) despite living amongst the ranks of the Polytheists[120].

With that said, more important to our discussion here than the initial numbers of supporters for both sides, was their rate of growth. It is indisputably evident that, from the moment the message was revealed to the Prophet (S), the ranks of the Muslims experienced constant exponential growth while the ranks of the Polytheists were experiencing a decrease of similar consistency and rapidness. One of the major causes for this phenomenon, other than the sweetness of belief Allaah places in the hearts of those whom He loves, was the fact that Islaam was able to transcend the lines of tribe and race. Having the ability to recruit followers of different tribes and cultures, and actively working to keep the doors open to diversity, was a crucial factor in facilitating growth and integration.

We have to also remember here that recruiting was not just a matter of simply crossing lines. During the *Siirah*, yesterdays enemies were actually becoming today's frontrunners in promoting the cause; literally overnight[121]. The all encompassing message of Islaam provided a role and place for everyone and, once converted, Islaam's remarkable transforming effects set in immediately. Islaam is not simply a Friday or Sunday affair that allows its adherents to remain stagnant, but rather it is a complete way of life and a global revolution. Islaam's message is so compelling and intense that often prisoners of war were so quickly integrated into the Islaamic society that many of their children became the scholars of their era.

Prisoners of war, once converted and freed, became full-fledged citizens, just as those who converted of their own free will prior to any military action were also immediately granted the title of 'brother in Islaam.' Non-Muslims who chose to pay the *jizyah* were also granted such freedom and protection that, soon after the death of the Prophet (S), Christians and Jews often begged the *Khulafaa'* to come free them of the religious oppression they suffered at the hands of their own brethren.

With all of these factors acting in concert, it is easy to understand why the Prophet (S) was able to conscript so many motivated followers so quickly. Everyone had something to gain from becoming Muslim and no one had anything to lose. In fact, as previously

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[120] Mr. Rogers points to al-'Abbaas (R) as a clandestine Muslim who was always helping to protect the Muslims and send them information. It is true that al-'Abbaas is said to have protected the wealth of a wealthy Muslim after the Battle of Khaybar by not informing Quraysh of his Islaam until he had placed 3 days distance between himself and Makkah and he convinced Abu Sufyaan (R) to accept Islaam rather than fight on the day of the Conquest. However, I am not aware of any particular narrations in which al-'Abbaas passed information to the Prophet (S). Obviously this is something to be expected, but I found it telling how ready Mr. Rogers was to make a claim without any proper evidence. Mr. Rogers also wrongly assumed, based on all of this, that the Prophet (S) had asked al-'Abbaas to pay his ransom as a cover story, without realizing that al-'Abbaas's Islaam had not been made known to the Prophet (S) before that date; after he had already been captured on the battlefield.

[121] For an extreme case see al-Bukhaari (no. 2653).

pointed out, Non-Muslim leaders were often left in their posts, after their full and sincere conversion. They had nothing to fear and everything to gain by rushing to Islaam.

Quraysh, in comparison, had nothing but a lost cause to help motivate their followers; despite acknowledging their initially large numbers and the many allies they were able to gather early on. This is because Quraysh called only to materialism and a continuation of the status quo (which included, by default, many evils such as oppression of the weak and constant tribal rivalry). This paradoxical combination of goals meant that those who had the most to benefit from maintaining the status quo were also those who had the most to lose by dying. Equally confounding is the fact that those who had the least to benefit from the status quo were also the least willing to die for those who stood to gain from their death. The outcome is nothing more than a paper tiger.

Along these same lines, it is also worthy of mention that other tribes, and would-be allies, always had in the back of their minds that a stronger Quraysh today could mean a tougher situation for themselves tomorrow. In fact, the very tribalism Quraysh was fighting to sustain was also a cause for hesitation in their own ranks when it came time to fight their own fathers, sons, uncles, and cousins.

In short, there was no great inspiring noble cause, no outstanding benefits, and plenty of room for loss in Quraysh's call. The only thing in their favor was the general consensus amongst the greatest benefactors of the status quo to keep it in place so long as it doesn't call for too much effort, risk, or loss. But when the going gets inevitably rough, the equation quickly becomes every man for himself; in an effort to minimize personal losses at the expense of others.

The Summary of the Prophet's (S) Grand Strategy:

The Prophet (S) focused primarily upon calling those nearest to him to Islaam and upon conveying the revelation to his tribe in an effort to recruit strong followers who might serve as the future foundation for spreading the message. **This stage** lasted during the Makkan period until the Prophet (S) was able to find a safe haven. The subsequent Migration to al-Madiinah represented the most pivotal moment of the entire *Siirah* because it marked the beginning of **a new period** and the birth of the Islaamic State. Naturally, once this safe haven was obtained, it became a vital priority to protect it by force, while balancing between economic stability and military activity. Finally, once the immediate threats surrounding the periphery of the safe haven were neutralized **the last stage** of the *Siirah* entailed a focus on actively spreading the message to new regions while being prepared, if anyone stood in the way of the teachings of the Qur'aan, to offensively spread the *influence* of Islaam by force. This stage continued until the Prophet (S) had entirely conquered Makkah, along with the rest of the Arabian Peninsula, shortly before his (S) death[122].

[122] These stages are: 1) building a foundation of followers and the search for safe haven, 2) acquiring a safe haven and consolidation of power to extend to the periphery, and 3) taking the offensive and overcoming all obstacles to expansion.

It is also of importance to point out that throughout the progression of these strategic stages, all of the instruments of power were being employed simultaneously in flawless harmony.

Politically, alliances (which were never betrayed by the Muslims) were constantly being made along the way (especially in the early stages of weakness) to limit the amount of enemies being fought at once. Active diplomacy was, in fact, a mainstay throughout all of the various stages; with an aim to neutralize all potential threats and obstacles, while capitalizing on possible opportunities for cooperation.

Militarily, defense was usually preferred over offense until after the Battle of the Trench. Usually the nearest enemies were fought before those more further off (for the obvious reason that the nearer ones were usually the most dangerous to Islaam and the Muslims). In specific, enemies that betrayed truces were usually dealt with quickly and harshly (usually with a type of preemptive strike). Less pressing threats were delayed till appropriate times. Credibility, therefore, was considered important[123] but never allowed to get out of hand. The full spectrum of military options was constantly being implemented throughout the *Siirah* although asymmetrical methods were often favored. This is especially evident from the financially important raids and ambushes that continued throughout the *Siirah*; especially during occasional lulls in hostilities with the main enemy: Quraysh. Similarly, fear tactics – such as assassinations – were also a great tool employed by the Prophet (S) against the enemy (while care was taken to never overstep the bounds of the *Shari'ah*).

Economically, obtaining new sources of income was always a high priority, especially in regards to military planning, and money was always spread throughout the society once obtained (to stimulate the economy and to aid self-sufficiency). Such a system meant that the two wheels of economy and military were always spinning in unison. This kept government small and of little burden while also providing for motivation and enticement to those who would aid in spreading Islaam and supporting the cause.

Information was always protected and sought from the enemy. Disinformation and trickery were also employed during wartimes. Poetry (the main media source of the times) was regularly composed to attack the enemy or to respond to the enemy's own offensive poetry. Simple propagation of the message, however, was the main and most effective psychological factor.

Morale was also a high priority and it was always kept high (through *Shuraa*, monetary incentives from *Ghaniimah* and *Fay'*, goodly words of encouragement, strong belief, miracles, revelation, and so forth).

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[123] See how the Prophet (S) took the decision to go out for one of the most strenuous expeditions, at-Tabuuk (*ar-Rahiiq al-Makhtuum,* p.418), simply for reasons of credibility. Some other examples were provided in *The Islaamic Guide to Strategy*.

The system of governance and military affairs was also extremely versatile and changed depending upon the situation and the overwhelming interests so long as the *Shari'ah* was respected and placed as the number one priority. Encouraging volunteering, rather than relying upon commands, and leading by example were both factors that led to higher output and productivity.

The Conclusion:

The Prophet (S) consistently out performed Quraysh, and the rest of Islaam's enemies, in taking both the worldly and heavenly means. Thus, victory was already assured for the believers – both by virtue of Allaah's preordainment and by virtue of abiding by Allaah's divine universal laws – before hostilities ever ensued. Ultimately, taking these means ensured that Allaah's divine guidance was constantly there to lead the Prophet (S) and his companions (R) to always take the appropriate measures at the appropriate times.

Accordingly, Allaah's guidance ensured that the Prophet's (S) vision was based upon firm principles and values; that his (S) policies were firmly rooted in clearly defined and determined interests; that his (S) grand strategy was complete and totally aligned with his objectives; and that, despite occasional obstacles and set backs, his (S) tactical performance was superb and unparalleled by his opponents.

Indeed, the path to victory and success in this life and the next has been expressly defined for us in the Qur'aan and the *Sunnah*, and the *Siirah* serves as our living and practical guide. Surely, no one turns his back upon these truths except that he is defeated before he ever begins. Indeed the path has been laid forth with evident clarity, but are there any who choose to give heed?